SIDDHA CULT IN TAMIḺNĀDU

ITS HISTORY AND HISTORICAL CONTINUITY

A Thesis submitted to the Pondicherry University in partial fulfilment

of the requirement for the award of the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN
HISTORY

By

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Under the Guidance of

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled, "Siddha Cult In Tamiḻnādu: Its History and Historical Continuity" submitted to the Department of History, Pondicherry University for the award of Doctor of Philosophy in History is a record of original and independent work done by R. Ezhilraman during the period of his study (2008-2015) under my supervision and guidance. It is further certified that the thesis has not formed the basis for the award of any Degree, Diploma, Associateship, Fellowship or similar title.

Place: Puducherry

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the thesis entitled "Siddha Cult In Tamiḻnādu: Its History and Historical Continuity" submitted to the Pondicherry University, in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of the degree of *Doctor of Philosophy* in History in the Department of History, Pondicherry University is a bonafide work done by me under the guidance of Dr. N. Chandramouli, Associate Professor, Department of History, Pondicherry University and that it has not previously formed the basis for the award of any Degree, Diploma, Associateship, Fellowship or any other similar title of any candidate of any University or Institution.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I place on record my immense gratitude to my Research Supervisor **Dr. N. Chandramouli,** Associate Professor, Department of History, Pondicherry University, whose devotion and committment to this work gave me the key stimulus and incentive right from the selection of the research topic. As my well-wisher and a valuable research guide he dragged me into a new field of study for which he left no stone unturned in collecting the sources and carryingout the field study till the submission of this Thesis. Without his persistent support, encouragement and help in more than one way, this work would not have attained this present shape and form.

I indebted to the faculties of Dept. of History, Prof. G. Chandhrika, Head of the Department and also one of the members of my doctoral committee, Prof. Venkata Raghotham, Prof. K. Rajan, Dr. K. Venugopal Reddy, Dr. Paokholal Haokip and Prof. K. Srinivas, my another Doctoral Committee member from the Dept. of Philosophy for their moral support and encouragement. I also convey my gratitude to Mr.K.Kaliyaperumal, Office Manager, Department of History, and other secretarial staff of the Department.

I extend my sincere thanks to the each and every staff member of Ananda Ranga Pillai Library, and Project Cell, Pondicherry University; and to Mr.Ramanujam, Mr. Narendran and Mr. Saravanan, the Librarians of French Institute of Puducherry; Dr.G.Muthushankar, Head, GIS of French Institute of Puducherry; Dr.G.Vijaya Venu Gopal, Epigraphist of Ecole Francais D' Extreme-Orient, my teachers in the K.M.Center for Post-Graduate Studies, Puducherry; Pondicherry Institute of Linguistic and Culture, Puducherry; Romain Rolland Library, Puducherry; Connemara Public Library, Chennai; Libraries of Madras University, the Mythic Soceity of Bangalore; Dr. S.K. Aruni, Deputy Director, ICHR New Delhi and beloved Sonapa, Babu, Sangappa and Mangalama, Staff Members of ICHR-SRC Bangalore; Librarian, Delhi University; Librarian, Sir Roja Muthaiya Library,Chennai; Librarian, Central Institute of Clasical Tamil,Chennai; and others for helping me in the process of data collection. I also extend my thanks to Prof. Murugaiyan Appasamy, Paris.

I thank my batchmates and friends who stood with me in thick and thin and helped me with their timely support: Dr. A.Perumal, Dr.S.Selvakumar, Dr. P.Yathees Kumar, Dr. Bithin Takur, Dr. Ramesh, Dr.M.Prasanna, Dr.S.Manikandan, Mr. Sandanakumar, Mr.Jayapradaban and co-scholars of the History Department of Pondicherry University, Tamil University Tanjavur, and the learned members of the associations like Indian, South Indian, Tamilnadu, Andhra Pradesh, and Karnataka History Congresses, whose support and encourgement evoked in me further interest in the field of research. To my junior campanions such Mr. K. Sadagoban, Mrs. M. Sundara Vadivu and Miss. Malathi Arumugam Iam thankful for their love and affection. I also express my great indebtedness to my parents Shri. S.Ramakrishnan and R. Narayani, my Brother R. Subburaman, my Sister Thamizhselvi Sethuraman and S.Sindhu, S.Seenuvasan; Dr. N.Vijaybaskar and Dr.N.Vijayakumar for their domestic support in carryingout my research peacefully and sincerely.

I am indebted to the family members of my beloved Research Supervisor for their continuous efforts, encouragement and involvement in providing me required facilities from dawn to dusk during the final stages of my research. I further extend my gratitude to the juniors of our research family under the shadow of our beloved supervisor viz., Mr.Nalini Kanth Rana, Mr.M.S.Dhiraj, Ms.R.RohiniKrishnan, Ms.R.Laksmi who patiently spared their time for years, when I was engaged in discussions with my mentor.

I also thank the Professors of Tagore Arts College and Kanchi Mamunivar Centre for Post Graduate Studies, Pondicherry; Mr. Karnam G. Mallikarjan, beloved Vice Principal; and my dear colleague teachers, administrative staff and my beloved Students of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Lepakshi, Anantpur, Andhra Pradesh who offered me a chance to serve them as PGT in Social Science. I extend my special thanks to Dr. B.Rama Chandra Reddy, Head of the Department of History, Bharathidasan Govt. Women’s College, Puducherry, who introduced me to my research supervisor, with whom I entered into a new field of study in history viz., epigraphy, iconography and Tantric cults.

Above all I sincerely thank the Finance Department, Pondicherry University for providing me financial assistance under UGC fellowship scheme for three years from the date of my joining. Further, I am also thankful to the ICHR, New Delhi which provided me a Travel-cum-Contingency grant. I would also like to utilise this chance to thank each and every one of the villagers where I went as part of my field study studying the temple art, for encouraging and helping me with a generous mind for the completion of this work.

To the Almighty, I owe my very existence on this earth. I offer my sincere *'Pramanams'* to Him.

R. EZHILRAMAN

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Chapter I
INTRODUCTION

Religion, in its earlier manifestation of a group of myriad, unorganized and pre-codified forms of cults and beliefs, carried the revitalizing and soothing message of an invisible, uncontrollable and unexplainable power that exercised a strong influence on the subconscious human mind. Those earlier manifestations of 'religion' can be seen in all the prehistoric societies of the past and simple societies of the present following the hunting-gathering / agro-pastoral way of subsistence. The portable art forms of Venus figurines of the Upper Palaeolithic in bone and ivory and the representation of female genital and secondary sexual organs in the Palaeolithic cave art portrays the strong influence of procreative symbolism in the Prehistoric belief system. One should not fail to recall in this connection that such primitive sex rites contributed everywhere to the development of religious ideas and, in a broad sense, to the evolution of human thought as a whole.

The evolution and spatial expansion of agricultural societies along with concomitant developments in subsistence strategies marked a paradigmatic shift in the belief systems, cults and practices. In place of the 'fertility of animal and human worlds', the 'fertility of the soil' takes precedence leading to the emergence of related rituals and practices. With the emergence of 'chiefdoms', 'religion' became an organized one catering to the diverse needs of a ' professionally stratified' society, assimilating into it the erstwhile cult systems, beliefs and practices. With the emergence of organised states/ kingdoms, the institution of 'religion' finally appears in a codified and structured form with elaborate ritual paraphernalia, stratified priestly class, subordinate servile classes, scriptural literature and monumental architectural establishments.

India, being the land of one of the oldest surviving civilizations of the world, can boast of giving birth to a variety of belief systems, cults, ritualistic practices and sectarian faiths, philosophies and literary compositions, beginning from the simple societies (hunting-gathering/agro-pastoral) to the elite ones (*Vēdic*/*Upaniṣadic*/ *Purāṇic/Buddhist/Jain /Tāntric*). All of them survived into the 21st century, albeit in modified forms. This feature of a continuous and surviving religious history over

several millennia is one of the rarest features of human history in any part of the world.

Classical India never had a ‘Religion’ in the strict sense of a Western definition. The Sanskrit word ‘*dharma*’, sometimes translated as *Religion,* means ‘customary law’ that was followed by the people voluntarily. Throughout classical South Asia, the study of law consisted of concepts such as penance, piety and ceremonial as well as practical traditions. In the context of emerging ‘chiefdoms’ and ‘early states’ based on social stratification and professional demarcation, ‘religion’ played the role of a ‘cohesive force’ between the rulers and the ruled. It was also during the same period one can notice the amalgamation of the prehistoric cults and belief systems in to the elite sectarian religions.

During the medieval period of Indian history ‘Religion’ performed its established role as the deliverer of spiritual emancipation and elevation. In this role, we have the development of scriptural literature first in Sanskrit and later in vernacular languages containing ritual formulations and their practical forms of application; philosophical discourses; iconographic prescriptions and injunctions; mythological stories on the origin of different classes/dynasties, temples and sacred centers, lineages of teachers; devotional music, dance and other forms of fine arts.

The evolution of Puranic theism coincides with the growth of Śaivism, Vaiṣṇavism and Śaktism as independent sectarian faiths, having their own philosophical, mythological, iconographical and ritual paraphernalia. The Bhakti movement of 7th Century C.E, one of the major contributions of south India to the pan-Indian religion emphasised the individualistic relationship with a personal deity rather than the more rule-bound strictures of traditional *Vēdic* Hinduism. Customarily discussed as a unified whole, the movement's message was expressed in diverse ways. At its core was the idea that salvation was attainable by all who believed, thus challenging the *Vēdic* system in which it was limited to male members of the ‘*dvija*’ castes of Brahmin, Kśatriya and Vaiṣya communities. It was in this movement that Women and members of the *sūdra* and untouchable communities were included and were offered a place of importance. In the vanguard of this movement were poet-saints who eschewed the Sanskrit language and rituals of Brahmin priests in favour of emotive devotional songs expressed in regional vernacular languages. These

proselytizers had diverse opinions regarding such things as the nature of prescribed ritual practices and the identity of their deity, be it Śiva, Viṣṇu or some other, but they shared a common devotional fervour. The institution of 'temple', which is the single most significant contribution of the Bhakti movement, played the catalytic role in bringing together all the social groups in to the ambit of spiritual urge, advancement and deliverance. The role of temple in the economic and cultural spheres of the times was more prominent than in the field of spirituality.

It is to be admitted that historically certain ideas and practices are evidently rooted primitive sex rites based on the magical association of natural and human fertility. Such magical belief systems and practices found their way into the philosophy, methods and practices of the sectarian groups of all faiths. They are manifested more prominently in the Saiva philosophy and practices.

The Early and Medieval Indian History saw the emergence of some radical and non-*vēdic* sectarian groups such as the *Pāśupata, Kāpālika, Kālamukha, Śakta* and *Siddha*/*Nātha* traditions of the *tāntric* branch which wielded considerable influence in the royal courts, affluent trade guilds and temples and among the masses as well. These sectarian faiths also made significant contributions to the efflorescence of arts and letters. The *tāntric* offshoots in Śaivism, Śaktism, Buddhism and Jainism gave supreme importance to the attainment of *Siddhi* in their philosophical thinking and practical methods. As a result of the involvement of diverse religious philosophies and sects in the Siddha cult, it emerged as a complex system in which the conceptual and practical ingredients of all the sectarian faiths can be identified. The intra-changes and inter-exchange of beliefs and rituals between these faiths continued throughout the medieval times, and these processes was so thorough and complete that none of the early religious systems could save their pure forms and all of them became totally *tāntric* in their philosophy, rituals and practices.

Tantra* and *Tāntrism

One of the main difficulties in defining *tantra* arises from the sensational connotations that the term has acquired over a period of time. In the beginning of 19^{th} century, when the *tāntric* texts were being studied by the Westerners, *tantra* was believed to be a conglomeration of bizarre and unconventional religious disciplines

consisting of sorcery, black magic, exorcism, and orgiastic practices. According to early scholars, it occupied an obscure niche within Hindu, Buddhist and Jaina religions of India. As research progressed and a broader range of *tāntric* textual material came to light, it became clear that *tantra*, far from being an unconventional religious practice limited to a small group of heretics, was actually one of the major components in the philosophical tenets and ritual practices of Hinduism, Buddhism and all the sectarian faiths of India.

Even though *Tāntrism* does not hold the *Vēdas* in high esteem, and even frequently condemns them, it still embraces a number of *Vēdic* theories and practices. Ritual worship, meditative techniques and practices associated with numerous deities from the *Vēdas*, *Brāhmanās* and *Purāṇas* appear in the *tāntric* literature presented with a *tāntric* orientation. This vast literature even contains instructions on building temples and consecrating images of the deities; information on places of pilgrimage and the exact ritualistic or meditative practices to be performed there. Practices concerning the application of herbs, gems, minerals and astrology were also brought into the fold of *tāntric* spirituality[1]. The *tāntric* ideals were absorbed by all sectarian faiths of India to such an extent that *tāntric* ideas are scattered throughout non-*tāntric* sources also.

Tāntric religion grew as a parallel tradition to the *Vēdic* in its content through the assimilation of various non brahminical[2], popular and heterodox cults and belief systems; scientific and technological treatises. At the earlier stage of history, *Tantra* arose as the sum total of man's knowledge of the objective world around him. Etymological interpretations of the word '*Tantra'*, clearly and conclusively point out that originally the word had no special religious or metaphysical significance or meaning. It was a way of life that sought the significance of knowledge, not in the realization of an illusionary absolute, but in the day-to day activities of the men, in the simple facts of life like agriculture, cattle breeding, distillation, iron-smelting etc., and in experimental sciences like alchemy, medicine, embryology, physiology, with a deliberate theoretical orientation that the structure of the microcosm and the

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[1] Pandit Rajamani Tigunait, *Śakti: The Power in Tantra*, Himalayan Institute press, Pennsylvania, 1998, p.19.

[2]The *Vēdic* philosophy branded *tantra* as *avaidic* and called for avoiding them and their followers. The *Kūrma Purāṇa* suggests that one should not even speak to the *Pāśupatas* and *Pañcarātras*. See S. C. Banerji, *A Brief History of Tantra Literature*, Naya Prokash, Calcutta, 1988, p.30

macrocosm are identical and that the key to the knowledge of nature is to be found in the human body itself. The etymological interpretations point to the fact that *Tantra* was a general term for any system serving as the guiding principle of any work and that the use of the work in a strictly religious sense evolved at a later date and came to indicate the scripture by which knowledge is spread[3].

These pristine forms of *tāntric* religion and philosophy in course of time went through many alterations due to the superimposition of the brahminical thought and philosophy. In spite of all such mishandling, grafting and the burden of interpolations, *tantra* could retain its basic structure and meaning in clearly rejecting the caste system and patriarchy and on the philosophical front, all external formalities with regard to spiritual quest. *Tantra* once for all banished the gender inequalities[4] and gave supreme importance to the women folk not only to be a part of the religion as practitioners but also as teachers. This place of a '*Guru*' provided to the women folk was the single most lasting contribution of the *Tāntric* religion, a designation which in terms of the sacredness is even superior to the God, him or herself.

In the primitive *Tāntric* cosmogony woman as a mother of the race was considered essentially to be the life-producer. Her organs and attributes had been the life-giving symbols par excellence. But under diverse historical conditions *Tantra* eventually came under the *Vēdāntic* fold. Yet the primitive substratum remained unchanged despite the interpolations of the elite philosophy and ideology.

According to the *tāntric* view, the act of creation is due to the union of Female and male principles, the former being the more important functionary. The *Tāntric* system is characterized by the worship of *Śakti* or the female energy of Śiva. The

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[3]The word *Tantra* is derived from the root '*Tan*' which means 'to spread' the knowledge. *'Tantra'* literally means thread, threads in a loom; web; metaphorically: guideline through the labyrinth of *samsāra* towards liberation. In a special sense it means 'the scripture by which knowledge is spread' (*tanyate vistāryate jñānam anena iti tantram*). In the initial stages, *tantra*, similar to the *Vēda*, is meant for study and understanding of the secular and practical aspects of the world, the knowledge of which is preserved with various communities of craft specialization. In course of time, these secular and practical treatises underwent transformation towards metaphysical approach and lost their practical applications. As they came under the influence of sectarian religions, *Tāntric* texts began to develop under separate schools of thought such as Śaiva and Śakta in the initial stages and later *Lōkayata, Sahājayana* and *Vajrayāna*.(N.N. Bhatacharayya,1992, Preface and Introduction, p.1)

[4]The main feature of the *Tāntric* philosophy is the high standard to which they have raised womanhood. She is considered to be the embodiment of all the primeval energy, and as such deserves all the veneration. She is elevated to the status of a teacher who can even give initiation to her children. In short, she is the active half of the *Ādinātha* (Śiva) who is nothing more than a '*Sava*' (corpse) without her.

Tāntric worshippers are otherwise called the *Kaulas* and their practices are known as *Kulācārā (Kaulācāra)*. Tradition says that the *Kulācārā* system was brought down by Siddha Mīnanātha to the earth. This tradition clearly establishes the relationship between the Siddha and *Tāntric* cults[5]. Particularly in Bengal region, *Tāntrism* has tended to merge with the Śākta cult[6]. Though the term '*tantra*' commonly applies to Śaiva or Śākta works of the *Tāntric* tradition, it is difficult to distinguish the Śāktism from Śaivism. Śaktism is the worship of the Supreme Power as divine creative energy (*Śakti*). Here, a female force creates, regulates, and destroys the cosmos. She is also worshipped as Śiva's spouse, as the dreadful Goddess Durgā or Kālī [7].

The female principle of Śakti played a predominant role in Tantric philosophy and rituals, which gradually developed into an independent cult. Vast mythology developed around this great goddess The Seven Mothers (*Saptamātrikas*):Brāhmi, Māheśwari, Kaumāri,Vaiṣnavi, Vārāhi, Indrāṇi and Chāmundi, were identified as the consorts of their male counterparts. Another factor is her identification as Sarasvati, as the goddess of Learning, the revealer of divine knowledge. *Śakti* is generally worshipped in three forms. Firstly, in her ordinary form. Secondly in her fierce form which is generally associated with the Kāpālikas, who offered animal and human sacrifices to propitiate Her. The third is the sensual form in which she is the object of worship with the school of the Śāktas or Kaulās. In this form she is called as *Ānandabhairavi,Lalitā and Tripurasundarī.* She is conceived as enthroned in *Śricakra*, consisting of several triangles in upward and downward direction, which is a symbolic form of male- female unity. Much Tantric literature has been produced with mythological explanation of the mystic circles and of the technical terms involved in the *Śakti* worship.

Tāntric influences have been strong in Śaivism from sixth century C.E towards the end of the Gupta period, when this religious current first became important. *Tāntrism* blended with *yōga*, particularly *haṭhayōga,* forms the doctrinal

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[5] B.S.L. Hanumantha Rao, *Religion in Āndhra: A Survey of Religious Developments in Āndhra from early times up to C.E. 1325),* Archaeological series No. 69, Dept. of Archaeology and Museums, Govt. of Āndhra Pradesh, Hyderabad, 1993, p. 291-292

[6] The provenance of the *tantras* is controversial. One floating tradition in the form of a verse says that the *tāntric* branch of knowledge which first appeared in *Gaudadeśa* (Bengal), was developed by the people of *Mithila* (Bihar), prevailed at some places in Maharashtra, and met with destruction in *Gurjara* (Gujarat). See S. C. Banerji, *A Companion to Tantra*, Abhinav Publications, Delhi, 2007, p.14.

[7] Mircea Eliade (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Religions*, Vol.7, p.174

basis of the medieval Śaiva sect of the Nāthas, who were also often called as Siddhas and Kānphaṭa *yogīs*. This group emphasizes *yōgic* control over mind and body including the winning of magical powers (*siddhis*) and aims at spiritual enlightenment through the domination of the inner 'serpent power' called *Kuṇḍalini Śakti*, which is believed to lie within the veins or nerves (*nādīs*) and centers (*cakras*) of a *yōgic* body. The impact and influence of the Kānphaṭa sect continues mainly through the diffusion of *haṭhayōga* into the mainstream Hinduism during medieval times and loses its control over the elite and popular sections of the society after 15th century C.E. However, a few *Nātha yōgīs* still exist in different parts of the country[8].

During the medieval period in south India, the Hindu religion deviated from its common textual prescriptions, traditions and institutions. Unlike the Nāyaṉārs, the canonised Tamil̲ Śaiva saints who were also basing themselves on the *tāntric* mysticism, the *Śaiva Siddhāntins* of the southern part of the Tamil̲ region, preached that God as a spiritual guide or *guru*, graciously permits himself to be realized by the purified souls. The *Śaiva Siddhānta* had a *tāntric* branch, known as *agamānta Śaivism* patronised by the Cōl̲ā rulers. They did not attach any importance to the *Vēdas*. They also abandon many traditional elements like caste, image worship, etc. On the other hand, the religio-philosophic idealist and monist Kāśmīr School of Śaivism disagrees in certain important respects with the teaching of Śaṅkara (8th century), the founder of *Advaita* monism, derived from the *Upaniṣādic Vēdānta* as a system of absolute idealism that is mainly followed by the intellectual elite. Śaṅkara, a native of Malabar resided in Vāranāsi (Benaras/Kāśī) travelled across the sub-continent and established a monastic order and monasteries (*mathas*). Like many hermitages (*āśramās*) and great shrines, these *mathas* became centers of brisk and vibrant religious activity and contributed to the realization of his ideal of Hindu unity. Then in the later periods, after the emergence of the individual structural temples and temple complexes, the temple centered rituals became more prominent. They include in it all sorts of *Tāntric* influences, more particularly in the temples dedicated to Śaiva and Śakti than the Vaiṣṇavite ones.

It was in *Tāntrism*, that the *Siddha* philosophy could develop into a codified system of learning and propagation because *Tāntrism* was not a *mōkṣa sāstra*, but

[8] *Ibid.,* Vol.13, p.10

advocated the attainment of *Siddha kāya* to be a *Jīvan mukta*, within a life span to reach the state of *Paramahamsa*[9], the highest stage of *tāntric sādhana*. Therefore, *Tantra* is known as all-comprehensive knowledge of the fact that the external objects about one's life are nothing but the outcome of certain conscious forces within. The objects and the beings of the material world are due to the play of the conscious energy in its various manifestations. Thus, *tantra* is a great source of knowledge about the social and religious life of ancient and medieval India. Nobody can claim to know about Indian religion fully and correctly without the study of *Tantras*[10].

Tāntrism as a school of spiritual teaching and practices stressed the necessity of involving all the constituents and dynamic forces of the human personality, including the emotions and bodily functions, in the process of spiritual endeavour, and recognized their affinity and interrelatedness with the cosmic forces which are to be integrated in order to achieve ultimate fulfillment and liberation[11]. Some relegate these *Tantras* to the class of black magic, whereas others consider them full of obscenities and unfit for the study of a man of good taste. But speaking the truth, like the *Vēda*, *Tantra* was primarily the way or means to understand the mysteries of life and universe. It arose as the sum total of human knowledge of the objective world and a way of life that sought the significance of knowledge, in the daily activities of men, such as agriculture, cattle breeding, iron smelting, alchemy, medicine, embryology, and so on.

Tāntrism developed most vigorously from the 4th to 6th centuries C.E., in areas where Brahmanic penetration had been weakest: in the Northwest, in Bengal and Assam in the East, and in the Āndhra area of the South. These are areas where one must assume non-Aryan influences in general, and more particularly tribal and folk practices involving *Shamanism*, witchcraft, and sorcery, and at least in the East and

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[9] According to *tantra*, *Hamsa* is the symbol of *puruṣa-prakṛti tattva*. *Ham* is male or Śiva; *Sah* is female and Śakti. Śiva - Śakti are therefore *Hamsa* which combined mean the bird. The material shape of this bird is variously described as that of a goose, flamingo and duck in various ways. *Hamsa* thus symbolize the unity of male and female elements which is the ultimate goal of *tāntrika Sādhana*. To the *Vāmācāra* School, the reversal of *Hamsa* is the method of *Tāntric* practice which is applied in the context of sex rites also in addition to the yogic *Sādhana* of *Kuṇḍalini Śakti*. (John Woodroffe, 2004, p.165)

[10] Rajkumar Pruthi and Rameshwari Devi, *Religions and Faiths in India*, Mangal Deep Publications, Jaipur, 2004, p. 18

[11] Haridas Bhattacharyya, (ed.), *The Cultural Heritage of India Vol IV: The Religions*, The Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta, 2nd Edn, 1956, p. 211

South, a cult of the Goddess. *Tāntrism* represented an outlook that placed the Goddess at the center of its "extensions" and to some extent, it cut across the sectarian and religious distinctions, whether it is Hindu, Buddhist, or even Jain[12].

The chief focus of *tāntric* rituals and practices is on the attainment of a physically strong body (*Siddhadēha* or *Kāya*) through various *yōgic* practices. *Prāṇāyāma* (controlled breathing) is one such *yōgic* exercise. Through several forms of the *Prāṇāyāma*, the innate energy in the human body identified as female energy is aroused to meet of the two aspects of *Tāntrism* namely, the sophisticated and the popular, the latter incorporates a number of non-Brahmanical Hindu elements – one of which is the concept of *Śakti*. *Śakti* resides in human body as the serpent power (*kuṇḍalini*) within *mūlādhāra cakra*. The dormant female energy is awakened by *yōgic* exercises and then she is to be taken up through the regions of five other *cakras* to the realm of *sahasrāra* at the center of the head, to merge with the male energy[13]. If the *sādhaka* gets success in this nearly impossible endeavour of unifying the female and male energies, he attains salvation (*jīvanmukti*) and the highest virtues. The term *mantra* includes two powers such as, the *vācakā* and *vācyā*. The word *vācakā* embodies words as well as sounds. There are two grades of sound and these are called *bindu* and *nāda*. *Bindu* is Śiva; *bīja* is Śakti, while the term *nāda* combines Śiva and Śakti. Śiva is recognized as the male principle and Śakti denotes the female principle, and through their union (*kāma-kala*) proceeds creation (*sṛśti*).

Tantras are generally classified into two types namely 'left-hand' and 'right-hand'. *Tantra* interprets the anti-Brahmanic practices of the left metaphorically, and also include under its heading a wide variety of ceremonial rituals assimilated into Hinduism that are simply non-*Vēdic*. These include the use of non-*Vēdic mantras* as well as *yantras* and *maṇḍalas,* anionic and non-*Vēdic* geometric devices. Adepts come from all castes, but low-caste and even tribal practitioners and teachers are especially revered. The goal of liberation within the body takes the specific form of

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[12] Mircea Eliade (ed.), *Op.cit*, Vol.6, p. 352

[13] By the yogic control of breath, the thirty knots in the spinal cord can be loosened, as a result of which the two vital winds, *prāṇa* and *apana*, can enter the spinal cord and move upwards as *hamsa* through the six nerve plexuses – *mūlādhāra, svadhisthāna, maṇipura, anāhata, viśuddha* and *ājna* – and on reaching the *Sahasrāra* region, assume the nature of *sūnya*. There are 7200 nerves within the body of which sixty-four can be distinctly located and fifteen utilized for yogic purposes. For more details see T. N. Misra, *Impact of Tantra on Religion and Art*, D.K. Print world (P) Ltd., New Delhi, 1997, p.95.

seeking magical powers *(siddhis),* which in orthodox forms of Hinduism are regarded as hindrances to spiritual achievement. Under the guidance or initiation of a *Guru*, who embodies the desired fulfillment and its transmission, the *siddhis* are sought through *yōgic* practices, through their anatomical analysis of the "subtle body" *(liṅga śarīra).* First practiced is *haṭha-yōga,* the "*yōga* of exertion or violence," that is, rigorous physical discipline geared to coordinating the body's "ducts" or "channels" *(nādīs)* and "energy centers" (*cakras*). This is followed by *kuṇḍalinī-yōga,* which awakens the dormant *śakti,* conceived as a coiled-up "serpent power" in the lowest *cakra* between the genitals and the anus, so that it (or she) can pierce and transform all the *cakras (cakrabhēda)* (usually six) and unite with Śiva in the "thousand-petalled Lotus/*cakra*" (*Sahasrāra*)in the region of the brain.

Beyond these practices, "left-handed" *Tantriks* pursue in literal fashion the ceremonial use and application of the "five '*m's" (pañca-makāra pūjā).* They incorporate into their cultic practices five 'sacraments' beginning with the syllable *ma:* fish *(matśya),* meat *(māmsa),* parched grain/postures/gestures of hand (*mudra)*[14] regarded as an aphrodisiac), wine *(madya)*, and finally sexual intercourse *(maithuna).* It is likely that most, if not all, of these practices involve the incorporation of elements of the cult and mythology of the Goddess, who is described as having delight in meat and wine and is approached by lustful demons for sexual intercourse. *Tāntric* texts stress that these practices are to be carried out within a circle of adepts and supervised by a male and female pair of "lords of the circle" who insist on strict ritual conventions that guard against an orgiastic interpretation. Theoretically, the practitioner is supposed to retain his semen at the point of orgasm, this being a sign not only of profound dispassion but an actualization of the non-procreative union of Śiva and Śakti at the dissolution of the universe of dualities. The Siddha /Nātha tradition symbolize the most comprehensive understanding and application of the theoretical and methodological tenets of *Tāntric* philosophy.

To summarise the main characteristic features of the *tantra sāśtra*, the first thing that comes out prominently is its acceptance in to its fold all the classes of people irrespective of caste, creed or sex. It offered freedom to be engaged in spiritual

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[14] *Mudrās* are mystical figures made by intertwining or twisting the figures and hands. The figures are supposed to resemble various animals and objects and to possess great power as occult forces. See Maurice A. Canney, *Encyclopaedia of Religions*, NAG Publications, Delhi, 1976, p. 250

practice according to one's competence and shows the practical method which would qualify him or her (*Sādhaka*) to proceed along the higher path of knowledge, in terms of experience as distinguished from or opposed to the theoretical one.

The Tāntric Sects

Although the tenets of *Tāntrism* were absorbed by almost all the elite religions and got transformed into their mythology, rituals and philosophy, two of the Śaivite path occupies an important place as the *athimārgikās* in the *tāntric* parlance. These sects represent a special ritualistic trend, a tradition of hoary antiquity containing many obscure elements. They are the Kāpālikas and Kālamukhas, considered to be the offshoots of the ancient Pāśupatas, play a significant role in popularizing Śaivism not only in the royal courts, but also among the masses during the period between 6th to 13th centuries C.E. The Kālamukhas even enjoyed the status of royal preceptors in medieval south India as also great scholars in *Śaiva Siddhānta*. The literary compositions of the Kāpālikas and Kālamukhas are a few but the tenets of their beliefs and practices may be gleaned from other literary sources.

Another *Tāntric* sect which enjoyed even more popularity and patronage both at the elite and popular levels during the medieval period is that of the Nātha Siddhas, whose influence extends over the entire subcontinent and continues into the present century. Between these three sectarian groups, there are many commonalities in terms of philosophy, mythology, cosmology, rituals and even individuals of the holy order. These sects represented a special ritualistic trend, a tradition of hoary antiquity, containing many obscure and primitive elements. They are considered to be the most *aṭimārgikas* of the Śaiva lineage.

The Kāpālikas

The Kāpālas or Kāpālikas appear to have been closely related to the *Sōmas*, *Saumas* or *Sōmasiddhāntins*[15]. This class of sectarian Śaiva faith seems to have originated very early on the religious stage of Ancient Indian History. The *ṛgvēda* contains a hymn known as '*keśisūkta*' which contain a description of a class of ascetics who were half-naked, or had only short brown garments soiled with dust,

[15] C. Chakravarti, 'The Soma or Sauma Sect of the Saivas', in *Indian Historical Quarterly*, 1932, Vol. 8, pp.221-23.

kept long hair. Although scantly mentioned in the inscriptions[16] of the ancient or medieval periods, the Kāpālikas were described in detail in the legends and literary works of the times[17]. The Kāpālikas seem to have originated in south India, and Śrisailam happens to be their main center of activity. The aim of the Kāpālikas was not simply achieving divine bliss but attaining the magical *yōgic* powers (*Aṣta siddhis*), which were the most sought after in the traditional *yōgic* practices which aim at the attainment of *Siddhadēha* and ultimately *Divyadēha*[18]. They used *six mudrās: kaṇthahāra* (Necklace), *alamkāra* (ornament), *kuṇḍala* (ear rings)*, bhasma* (ashes) *and yagnopavita* (sacred thread). Their identity marks *Kapāla* (Skull) and *Khatvāṅga* (club) were not mentioned as part of the six *mudrās* (*mudrika ṣatka*).They aim for the attainment of highest happiness located in the female organ (*Bhagāsana Sthāna*) which is to be propitiated through the usage of *Pañca-makāra Sādhana* [19]. Patañjali described them as '*āyahśūlika*' (one with an iron lance /trident). Śiva worshipped by them is in the form of '*Kapālēśwara*'.

Briggs gave a detailed description of the Kāpālikas[20] thus: *"They went about naked, wore a cap while travelling, smeared their bodies with funeral ashes, were armed with a trident or sword, carried a hollow skull for a cup or begging bowl, were half-intoxicated with spirits which they drank from the hollow skull, were known to commit acts of violence; their garments (when they wore them) were of patch-work, they slept on the ground, and wore a rosary of rudrākṣa seeds. They offered human sacrifices to Cāmuṇḍā in order to obtain magic powers, and often resorted to tricks to ensnare victims. Dust from their feet was supposed to cure disease and water from the washing of their feet drove away demons. The powers which they acquired included the ability to fly through air. Their wits were sharpened by the use of wine, eating*

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[16] Lorenzen discussed inscriptions from medieval Karnātaka speaking about the presence of the Kāpālikas during 9th -13th Centuries C.E. in Lorenzen, David N. *Kāpālikas and Kālamukhas: Two Lost Saivite sects*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1972, (Rev.edn.1991), pp. 24-29; Appendix –pp. 215-223.

[17] *Ibid*, pp.31-71

[18] David Gordon White, *The Alchemical Body: Siddha Tradition in Medieval India*, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1996, p. 102.

[19] N. N. Bhattacharya, *Op.cit*., p. 254. He who knows the essence of the six insignia, who is proficient in the highest *mudrā*, and who meditates of the Self as seated in the vulva (*bhagāsana-stha*) attains *nirvāṇa*. (The Kāpālikas) define the six insignia as the *kaṃika* (earring), the *rucaka* (necklace), the *kuṇḍala* (earring), the *śikhāmaṇi* (crest jewel), ashes (*bhasma*), and the sacred thread (*yajñopavīta*). The skull (*kapāla*) and the *khaṭvāṅga* club are declared to be the secondary insignia (*upamudrā*). If the body is marked with these (various insignia) one is not born again here (on earth). See Lorenzen, David N., *Op.cit.*, p. 220

[20] Briggs, G.W., *Gorakhnāth and the Kānphata Yogis,* p. 224-25.

distinguished food, and the embrace of the Śakti of Bhairava. They were always lewd, and on occasion carried off maidens".

The Kālamukhas

Originating in Kaśmir the Kālamukhas formed the principal branch of Pāśupata Śaivism in Karnātaka, Āndhra and Tamilnādu regions during 9th – 13th Centuries C.E. They are closely associated with the Lakulisas as the exponents of the Pāśupata philosophy in the south. They are said to have descended from the third disciple of Lakuliswara by name Kauruṣa or Kālānana[21]. Technically they were more extreme in their practices than the Kāpālikas, but they cannot be identified or distinguished[22]. They are referred to as royal preceptors (*Rājagurus*) in the inscriptions of the medieval south Indian dynasties during that period. As many as 90 inscriptions refer to the Kālamukha sect, its branches, *pariṣads* and donations made to these in the form of temples, land grants etc.[23] The Kālamukhas are described as making a '*Siṅha Nāda'* (roar of a lion) by blowing through the horn of an antler. One of their scholarly and spiritual assemblies called '*Simha Pariṣad*' is mentioned in some of the inscriptions of Āndhra region. Another '*Śakti pariṣad'* was mentioned to be active in the Karnātaka region. The names of the Kālamukha teachers and royal preceptors were suffixed by terms like *'Jīya'* '*śakti*', '*rasi*', '*paṇdita*', etc. They are describes as having the ash mark on their forehead. The spiritual parents of the Kālamukhas were the Pāśupatas, Both sects revere the legendary teacher Lakulīśa. Both of them bear similar or identical names and undertake pilgrimages to Kedārnāth and Srīparvata. The Kālamukhas enjoyed munificent royal patronage form almost all south Indian dynasties such as Chāḷukyās, Kākatiyas, Cōḻās and Pāṇdyas during medieval period. They acted as the heads of a large number of Mathas in such important pilgrim centres as Śrisailam, Ālampūr, Bezawada, Amarāvati, Dakṣārama, Agastēśvaram, in Āndhra Pradesh[24].

[21] V.S.Pathak, *History of Saiva Cults in Northern India from Inscriptions*, Varanasi,1960.p.28

[22] Briggs, G.W., *Gorakhnāth and the Kānphata Yogis,* p. 15

[23] Lorenzen, David N., *Op.cit.*

[24] B.S.L.Hanumantha Rao, Religion in Andhra (A survey of Religious Developments in Andhra from early times upto A.D.1325),1993(Rev.edn),Hyderabad,p.287.

The Nātha Siddhas

The Siddhas or Nātha Siddhas are one of the most respected spiritual teachers who still have the same divine standing among their followers, who in majority belong to the marginalized sections of the society. The antiquity of the Siddha Cult is as old as the *Tāntric* religion itself which encompass almost all religious faiths of the country, past and present. In fact, the Siddha Cult transcended the narrow religious or dogmatic boundaries and became a part and parcel of the body politic of the Indian spiritual tradition and Philosophy as a whole[25]. But the popularity of the Siddha Cult became more pronounced during the medieval times.

Nāthism originated among persons belonging to the lower sections of the Society. The *Nātha-Siddhas* had a general predilection toward occult practices and acquisition of supernatural powers. They believe in the divine power of the *Guru* or preceptor who initiates the disciple according to his receptivity. According to *Nātha* cosmology, before the creation everything was dark and void. In that vacuity came into being a bubble from which an egg was formed. From the sweat of the primal god, *Ādinātha*, was born in his lover Kētaki or Mānasa, and from their union sprung Brahma, Viṣṇu and Śiva. In order to test them *Ādinātha* assumed the form of a mutilated corpse. Having seen the corpse Brahma and Viṣṇu avoided it, but Siva recognized it as the body of his father and took it to the cremation ground. When the body was in flames, *Mīṉanātha* sprang from its navel, Gōrakṣa from its head, Hādi-pa from its bones, Kānu-pa from its ear, and Chauraṅgi from its legs. They are the five original *Nātha Siddha*s[26] who are also called as the *Ādi Pañcākam*. It is not clearly known when these five *Ādi Nāthas* were added up to become *Nava Nāthas.*

Since very early times, the popular belief systems, magical rites and rituals found their way into the Śaiva and Śakta sectarian philosophy, rituals and pantheon. The original classification of Śaivism was into three schools: *Vēdic*, *tāntric* and *Miśra*. In course of time, *tāntric* ideology was affected by all of them in various degrees. The *Vāmācāra* and *Dakśiṇācāra* classification of *tāntric* sects in both of them speak about the Brahminical interpolation. Interpolating the popular beliefs and

[25] N. Chandramouli, '*Siddha Cult In South India : Representations In Art And Their Ramifications'*, (Paper presented in the International Seminar on 'World Religions after September 11th: An Asian Perspective' Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, 17-19, January, 2009)

[26] Lorenzen David N., *Op.cit.*, p.285

rites, it is in the *Vāmācāra* sects that the *tāntric* religion blossomed in various directions of which the Siddha cult is the most important and long lasting one.

The Siddha cult spread in various directions and ultimately got absorbed by the Tibetan Buddhism and again got transported into the Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava schools of Hinduism during the medieval times. In the process of it development and spread the *Siddha* cult absorbed various elements of other belief systems such as Pāśupata, Kāpālika, Vajrayāna, Śakta and so on. As a result, the medieval *Nātha Siddha* cult grew as an amalgamation of all these diverse sectarian beliefs and practices, which later further absorbed into its fold even the Sūfi philosophy and personalities. Even today in South India the *Siddha* tradition in various forms is still in a flourishing state having millions of devout adherents.

Two later works place some symbolic elegance on the Nine Nāthas: the *Tantrarāja Tantra* correlates the Nine Nāthas with the nine bodily orifices, while the *Tantra Mahārnava* identifies eight Nātha Siddhas with the eight cardinal directions. This latter list places Ādinātha at the 'center' of the Indian universe, in the land of Kurukśētra; a location that would correspond to a widespread *Kaula* doctrine, which calls the central *pītha* of its mystic universe, the *Ādipītha*.

In the *Satsahasāra Samhita* and the *Samvartārthaprakāsa,* two other works of the Western Transmission, this group of nine (abstract) Nāthas are doubled into a set of eighteen Nāthas or Siddhas as the case with the Tamiḻ tradition which holds that there were originally nine Sittars, before their number was doubled to eighteen.

However, the aggregate of the Nine Nāthas came to be identified, during 11th-13th century, with the legendary or historical founders of the *Nātha sampradāya.* The historical name that headed most lists was that of Matśyēndra/Mīṉanāth/Luipā. These names often found together with Gōrakṣa, Carpati, and Nāgārjuna in the Siddha lists. Next in frequency are Chauraṅgi, Vyāli, Ādināth, Tanti or Tintini, Karnari/Kanerī, and Bhairava, followed by Jālandhara, Kanthadi, and Gōvinda. Of these, the following names appear in all three types of Siddha lists, i.e., of the Indo-Tibetan *Siddhācāryas* (numbering 84), Indian Mahāsiddha *yōgins*, and Indian Rasa Siddhas:

Matśyēndra-Mīṉa, Gōrakṣa, Nāgārjuna, Carpati, Chauraṅgi, Tanti/Tintini, Karnari/Kaneri, and Kanthadi[27] (see Appendix 1).

There is no uniform list found regarding the names of the Nātha-siddhas. The most commonly occurring names are (1) Matśyēndra, (2) Gōrakh, (3) Carpati, (4) Jālandhara, (5) Kaneri, and (6) Chauraṅgi. Also figuring in many lists are (7) Nāgārjuna, (8) Bhartrhari, and (9) Gopīcand. Ādināth is often added to head the list, in the role of creator god, this is a tradition that dates back at least to the *Kulārnava Tantra*, which places him at the head of the divine stream *(divyaugha)* in its enumeration of the founding *Kaula gurus*.

Furthermore, there are many regional variations in the name employed for any given Nātha Siddha: just as Matśyēndra can become Mīṉa; so Nāgārjuna can become Nāgnāth or Arjun Nāga; Kaneri, Krśṇapāda, or Kānha; Gōrakh or Gōrakṣa; Carpati either Karpati or Carpata; Chauraṅgi or Pūran Bhagat; and Jālandhara or Hādi-pā. G. W. Briggs in his work mentions the names of Nava Nāthas as Gōrakṣanātha, Matśyēndranātha, Carpatanātha, Maṅgalanātha, Ghugonātha, Gopinātha, Prānanātha, Suratanātha and Cambanātha[28].

By illustrating such variants, David Gordon White offer four lists of the nine founding Nāthas, all of which date from the 13th to 16th centuries. In Bengal, two sources dating from the seventeenth century but harking back to earlier traditions provide the following data of eight Nāthas viz., (1) Ādinātha (identified with Śiva) is the founder of the order; his two disciples are (2) Mīṉanātha (Matśyēndranātha) and (3) Jālandhari-pā (Hādi Siddha); (4) Gōrakhnātha is the disciple of Mīṉanātha; (5) Queen Mayanāmatī is the disciple of Gōrakhnātha; (6) Kānha-pā and (7) Gopīcand are the disciples of Jālandhari-pā; and (8) Bail Bhādāi, the disciple of Kānhapā.

According to a 13th-14th century Maharashtrian source, the divine founder of the clan is Dattātreya, who is the guru of (1) Matśyēndranāth and (2) Jalendra (Jālandharanāth). Matśyēndra is the guru of (3) Gōrakhnāth, (4) Carpati, and (5) Revana; while Jalendra is the guru of (6) Karina-pā (Karnarī-pā); (7) Bhartrhari and (8) Gopīcand. Gōrakhnāth is the guru of (9) Gahaninās. The third list is found in a

[27] *Ibid.* p.91-92

[28] G. W. Briggs, *Gorakhnāth and the Kānphata Yogis*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1938, p. 136.

ca.1400 C.E., Telugu text from Āndhra Pradesh, the *Navanātha Charitra* of Gaurana, which was written at the behest of the abbot of a Śaiva monastery at Śrisailam. The fourth list is adapted from a ca.16th century *paramparā* recorded in the Punjab, which gives the following succession: Śakti and Śiva (1) initiated Ude (2), second of the Nine Nāthas and founder of the *Jōgi panth.* His descendants were two demons, Rudrāgan and Jālandhar. Descended from Jālandhar, the demon convert and initiate were Matśyēndra (3) and Jālandhari-pā (4). Matśyēndra was the *guru* of Gōrakh (5), Arujan Nāga (6), and the father and *guru* of the two Jain *tīrthaṅkaras* Nimnāth and Pārasnāth (7). Jālandhari-pā's disciples were Bārtrināth (Bhartrhari) (8) and Kānipā (Kānha-pā) (9)[29].

The most important feature of this cult is the belief in attaining supernatural powers through *yōgic* practices. The Siddhas are believed to be experts in the four kinds of *Yōga*[30] and to have attained the eight *siddhis*[31]. They used to command great influence among the rulers and the people in the early medieval period in Āndhra and Karnātaka. Śrisailam is also referred as the nucleus for all the Śaiva religious activities in those days. Though there are no exclusive followers of the cult in Karnātaka, the centres of their activity are there even now. Gōrakhnāth and Matśyēndranāth themselves are believed to have popularized the cult in Karnātaka. Nātha Panth *mathas* are found in many parts of Karnātaka beginning from Handi Badganāth in Belgaum district to Kadire and Vittal in Dakśiṇa Kannada. Bhois of Gulbarga area are among the followers of Nātha Pantha[32].

The Nātha Siddhas being Śaivites by sectarian affiliation, are described with characteristic attributes /marks (as the Kāpālikas) such as the sacred ash mark (*tripundra*= three horizontal lines of ash), ear-rings, woolen sacred thread to which are tied the horn and brass bell (signifying the principles of Śiva and Śakti as *nāḍa* and *pavitri*), the wallet or a cloth/skin bag on the right shoulder, and the club (*daṇda*). They are said to have sect mark of a '*yōni-liṅga*' the organ of regeneration symbolizing divine procreation, on their right forearm. The Nātha Siddhas are also

[29] David Gordon White, *The Alchemical Body,* p.92

[30] The four kinds of *yōga* are *Mantra-yōga, Laya-yōga, Haṭha-yōga* and *Rāja-yōga*. For more details see Gavin Flood, *An Introduction to Hinduism*, p.96.

[31] B.S.L. Hanumantha Rao, *Op.cit*, p. 290.

[32] Suryanath U. Kamath (ed.), *Op.cit*, pp. 427-428.

known as *Kaphat* (split ear) *yōgis* the followers of whom spread across the subcontinent, north of the Vindhyas and extends into the adjoining Nepal.

Siddha Cult in South India

Siddha cult is one of the celebrated and popular cults in south India. Both the Siddha and the *Nava Nātha* cult of South India becomes the most popular sectarian faith of the *tāntric* group during the 9th-12th centuries which is the amalgamation of the Śaiva, Śākta, Vajrāyana, Sahājayana schools of philosophy and by the 12th century the narrow sectarian differences between these religious sects disappear and the codified system of all these got fully developed in the Nātha Siddha cult. The Siddha cult was popularly more pronounced during the medieval times and also continuing as a popular cult in this present era.

The origin of the Siddha cult is not authentically dated but can be related to the earliest form of Śaivism *i.e*, the Pāśupata School of Śaivism. 'The term *Siddha* is a Sanskrit expression which means one who has attained *siddhi*. *Siddhi* itself means generally perfection reached as a consequence of certain modes of penance. A Siddha was an inspired seer who had a vision to read not only the past and the present, but could also read the future'[33]. But Tirumūlar's view that a Siddha not only is one who has untied the knots of past *karma*, but also squeezed and crushed the roots of future *karma*[34]. Most of the Siddhas belong to the marginalized sections of the society. This cult transcended the narrow religious or dogmatic boundaries and became a part of the Indian spiritual tradition and Philosophy. Siddhas used to command great influence among the rulers and the people in the early medieval period in Āndhra and Karnātaka[35]. Even today in south India the Siddha tradition in various forms is in a flourishing state having with millions of devout adherents.

Nātha Siddha Cult of Āndhra Pradesh

The Siddhas appear to have commended great respect in medieval society in Āndhra region. The Telugu literature of the age makes copious references to the

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[33] V. Ramachandra Dikshitar, 'The Siddhas of South India', in the *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, 7th Session, Vol. 7, Madras University, Madras, 1944, p.162.

[34] *Ibid,* p. 20

[35] P.V. Parabrahma Sastry, *Sri Sailam: Its History and Cult*, Srisaila Devasthanam Publication, Sri Sailam, (4th Edn), 2007, p.35

Siddhas, their learning and their powers. The *Vikramārka Charitra* of Jakkana refers to one of the numerous *Mantras*, called *Siddhasārasvata mantra*, which is believed to make the practitioner proficient in all branches of learning. Vallabhāmātya also makes a reference to the same *mantra* in his *Kridābhirāmam*. Gaurana wrote his *Navanātha Charitra* at the instance of Mukti Sāntarāya, the pontiff of the Bhikśavrtti *matha* on the Śriparvata or Śrisailam. The stories of the Siddhas were narrated at public places like the *Purāṇas*[36].

Śrisailam was the seat of the *Yōgic* Śaiva cult of the Siddha Nāthas. The *Matśya purāṇa* calls Śrisailam as the *Siddha-kśētra*. Ālampūr and Tripurāntakam, the western and eastern gateways respectively of Śrisailam were also centres of the Siddha cult. Evidently in the Brahmēśvara temple of Ālampūr there found certain mystic symbols. Besides, the ceilings of Ālampūr temples contain the *Kuṇḍalini* sculptures, which are obviously of *Yōgic* significance[37]. Besides, this place is also considered to be one of the *Śakti-pīthas* and Bhramaramba as one of the eighteen Śaktis[38]. White in his work *The Alchemical Body*, states that Āndhra country (Śriparvata-Śrisailam) as the cradle of the alchemical art in India; when the Māhēśvara Siddhas begin to appear in the 10th century, the magical alchemy became transmuted into *Tāntric* and Siddha alchemy[39]. This place is considered to be a great Śaiva centre where several *yōgins* and Siddhas used to practice penance and the flow of pilgrims steadily increased even by the time of Śaṅkarāchārya's visit to the place, during the early part of the 6th century C.E. To some extent, it is also referred as the nucleus for all the Śaiva religious activities in those days. All the Śiva temples in Karnātaka and Āndhra were controlled by the presiding pontiffs of the *Mathas* at Śrisailam[40]. The principal seats of *Śakti* worship in Āndhra are Śrisailam[41] and

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[36] B.S.L. Hanumantha Rao, *Religion in Āndhra*, Hyderabad, 1993, p. 291

[37] *Ibid.* Generally, Śrisailam is considered as one of the greatest Śaiva pilgrim centres in south India. It is situated on a flat top of the Nallamalai hills in Kurnūl district of Āndhra Pradesh. The presiding deity of this holy shrine of Śrisailam is the god Śiva called Mallikārjuna and his consort known as Bhramaramba. It is believed that the *liṅga* in this temple is a self-emanated one, and also regarded to be one of the twelve *jyōthirliṅgas*.

[38] P.V. Parabrahma Sastry, *Op.cit*, p.1

[39] David Gordon White, *Op.cit*, p.77.

[40] P.V. Parabrahma Sastry, *Op.cit,*. pp.14-15, 35.

[41] The *Kubjikamata Tantra* copied between the 6th and 7th Centuries C.E enumerates five *Śakti Pīthas*: *Odiyāna* in Orissa, *Jāla* in Jalandhara in Punjab, *Purāna* in Maharashtra, *Mātaṅga* in Śrisailam in Āndhra and *Kāmākhya* in Assam. See R. S. Sharma, *Early Medieval Indian Society: A Study of*

Ālampūr. Bhramarāmbā and Jogulāmbā of the respective places are among the 'Eighteen' *Śaktis* of India.

The Siddhas, Kāpālikās, Kālamukhas, Pāśūpathas, Ārādhya and Vīraśaivas are most prominent sects which highly enjoyed the royal patronage in Śrisailam. Śrisailam became a suitable resort for those Siddhas. There found several literary evidences starting from 7th century, and the Jain works of 11th century, mentioning about the Siddhas of Śriparvata (Śrisailam). As mentioned earlier, a small label inscription in early 7th century characters found on the rocky floor on the way to the Sāraṅgadhāra *matha* found with the word '*Sa ra sa pa ra mā tma*'. An ordinary *Sādhu* or *bairagi* cannot be called a *Paramātma*, and only a man possessing divine or *yōgic* powers, bears this name. The prefix '*Sarasa'* may denote the art of '*Rasa Viḍyā*'. (The same label inscription is also noticeable at Ālampūr temple complex). Further, the *Agṉipurāṇa* also describes Śrisailam as *Siddha-kśētra*, which indicates that this cult flourished here even in the 4th-5th centuries. As mentioned earlier, the *Nava Nātha Charitra*, a Telugu work by Gaurana of the 15th century is a story of the nine Nāthas, which was written at the instance of Mukti Sāntarāya, the spiritual head of the Bhikśa Vritti Matha at Śrisailam. This work also describes in detail the visits of Gōrakṣanātha, Allamāprabhu and Atrēya to Śrisailam. Atrēya is said to have set up a *Rasayōga* laboratory in a cave near *Pātālagaṅga*. Gaurana cleverly connects Allamāprabhu of the 12th century with Gōrakṣanātha Siddha of about the 14th century C.E. At first this work was originally written by one Śrigiri once and Gaurana in the second instance. Here the latest and the earliest faiths of Śaivism at Śrisailam are purposely brought together to convince the readers that Vīraśaivism is not different from Siddha Śaivism.

The rectangular stone panels on the four lengthy walls of the great *prakāra* of Śrisailam contain a variety of stories, legends, epics and traditions in the form of low-relief sculptures. They also contain a variety of *tāntric* representations such as *Yōgic* exercises, sexual scenes and more importantly the representations of Nātha-Siddhas. According to tradition preserved in the Mackenzie Manuscripts this wall was constructed by one Liṅgayyā in *Saka* 1334 i.e., 1412 C.E. The *prakāra* sculpture is in typical Vijayanagara style of the 15th-16th centuries. In every respect it is similar to the

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Feudalisation, Orient Longman, Delhi, 2001, p. 247. The lists of Eighteen *Śakti Pīthas* are as many as on today.

sculpture of Hazara Rāma temple built by Krśṇadēvarāyā at Hampi[42], thus containing the early forms of the Vijayanagara Art.

Nātha Siddha Cult in Karnātaka

Karnātaka, a multi-religious land located in the northern part of South India is also familiar for the age-old Nātha cult. This cult was very popular in Karnātaka, which seems to represent a particular phase of the Siddha cult of India. The Nātha-Siddha cult targeted against rituals and practices that sanctified inequalities and exploitation of the Brahmins. This sect is characterized by its numerous monasteries and by the large measure of its social equality, which had a tremendous influence on the Kan̲n̲ada country, like the Vīraśaiva movement of Karnātaka[43].

Though there are no exclusive followers of the cult in Karnātaka, the centres of their activity are there even now. Gōrakṣanātha and Matśyēndranātha themselves are believed to have popularised the cult in Karnātaka. It is believed that Gōrakṣanātha was instrumental in the codification of the *Nātha panth* by bringing together 'twelve separate sects' (*Bārah panthi*) in various parts of the country. None of these twelve sects had their religious or sacred centers anywhere in Peninsular India. The *Nātha sampradāya* was prevalent in the Vijayanagara Empire, particularly in the South Kanara district, with Kadire being an important centre, as well as in Āndhra, especially at Śrisailam[44]. During this time, all the Śiva temples in Karnātaka and Āndhra were controlled by the presiding pontiffs of the *Mathas* at Śrisailam[45]. *Nātha Panth mathas* are found in many parts of Karnātaka beginning from Handi Badganāth in Belgaum district to Kadire and Viṭṭal in *Dakśiṇa* Kan̲n̲ada. Bhois of Gulbarga area are among the followers of *Nātha Panth*[46]. It is also said that the name Karnēri or Kanēri-nāth is so named because he originally hailed from (Vijayanagara

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[42] K. Thimma Reddy (ed) *Srisailam: History and Culture*, Telugu University, Srisailam, 1988, p. 63.

[43] By the end of the 12th century, Basava, a Brahmin by birth, had refused to undergo the *upanayana* ceremony, founded the Vīraśaiva sect or the Liṅgāyats. The aims and achievements of this movement were ahead of other such sects such as the Nātha-Siddha in Karnātaka. See A.L. Basham, *A Cultural History of India*, OUP, Delhi, 1975, p. 279; also see Braj Ranjan Mani, *Debrahmanising History:*, Delhi, 2007, pp. 166-167

[44] Anna L. Dallapiccola and Anila Verghese, *Sculpture at Vijayanagara: Iconography and Style*, Manohar, New Delhi, 1998, p. 79. (henceforth Dallapiccola)

[45] P.V. Parabrahma Sastry, *Op.cit*, pp.14-15, 35

[46] Suryanath U. Kamath (ed.) Gazetteer of India, Karnataka State Gazetteer, Part I, Bangalore, Government of Karnātaka, 1982, 427-428.

in) Karnātaka or Kanara[47]. Regarding the *Nātha Pantha* of Karnātaka, White states that, 'although no one of the twelve modern sub-sects of the *Nātha Sampradāya* appears to ever have been based in Karnātaka, the ancient and prestigious monastery of Kadri, located on "Jōgi Hill" on the northern outskirts of Maṅgalore, is a permanent fixture of Nāthism, and it is the founding lineage of the abbots of this monastery that is recorded in this inscription[48]. The Siddhas/Nāthas in other parts of the subcontinent are nine in number[49] and this *nava nātha* cult was one of the important facets of popular medieval religion of India. This is cult is also centered in the surrounding suburbs of Bangalore which is revealed by the sculptures found in the pillars of Ulsūr Somēśvara temple, in Kalāsipāḷayam Jalakaṇtēśvara temple, and in Kōtē Veṅkataramana Sāmy temple. Besides, similar sculptures are also found in the temples at Hampi, Nandhi, Nandhi-beta, Āvani, Nañjungudu and also in the temples found around the Mysore region.

Siddha Cult in Tamiḻnādu

Besides the main stream *bhakti* tradition in Tamiḻnādu, there was a group of Tamiḻ Śaiva poets who were much closer to the Kaṉṉada-speaking Vīraśaivas in spirit and who, unlike the Vīraśaivas, remained on the fringes of society. Traditionally, these poets, known as Siddhas or *cittars* in Tamiḻ are said to be eighteen in number. While the tradition claims great antiquity, most of these poets probably liked no earlier than the 17th century on the Tamiḻ Cittar tradition[50].

There are many Siddha-centres all over the Tamiḻnādu. The temples in Tamiḻnādu contain the sculptures depicting the *Tāntric* rites and the images of the venerated Siddhas in it. However, the history of the Siddhas of South India, particularly Tamiḻnādu, have played a conspicuous part has become almost a forgotten chapter and no Tamiḻ scholar has so far come forward to examine their achievements which were mostly miraculous in character, nor their great services in

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[47] See David Gordon White, *Op.cit*, pp.396-397 (n72).

[48] *Ibid*., p.94; see also G. W. Briggs, Gōrakhnāth and Kānphata Yogis, p.58;

[49] There is a controversy about the Nava Nātha list which often varies in names and many scholars identified separate lists based on their own observations.

[50] Norman J. Cutler, *Songs of Experience: The Poetics of Tamil Devotion*, Indiana University Press, USA, 1987.

medicine and *yōga*[51]. The spread of this cult in Tamiḻ region is ambiguous. However, there are many literary compilations in Tamiḻ like *Tirumandiram* of Tirumūlar, *Tiruppugaḻ* of Aruṇagiri, and collections of the songs of individual Siddhas like Śivavākkiyar, Pāmbāṭṭi, Paṭṭiṇaṭṭār, Itaikātar, Kaduveli Siddhar etc., which facilitated the spread of this cult to every nook and corner of the Tamiḻ land. On the other hand, *tāntric* modes of worship are also taking place in various temples of medieval period. Besides, starting from the Cōḻa period to the post Vijayanagara period and beyond, *tāntric* sculptures were occupied the parts of the temples in its pillars and *gōpuras*, *maṇdapas*, etc. As a testimony of existence of this cult and patron rendered to it by royal authorities also revealed in the inscribed records issued by the respective rulers of the Tamiḻ region. Even today, the famous pilgrim centres all which located in the hilly regions like Tiruvaṇṇamalai, Parvathamalai, Maruthamalai, Veḷḷiaṅgiri, Kollimalai, Kañjamalai, Saduragiri, Paḻaṉi, Poṉṉimalai, Kaṉṉivādi, Kasavaṇapaṭṭi, Tiruvakkarai, Mailam, Mēlmaruvattūr, etc. are also celebrated as a great centres of Siddha worship in Tamiḻnādu.

Siddha Cult in Puduchērry[52]

Puduchērry is a spiritual, peaceful and secular territory in which all sorts of religious people are living. It is a traditional land of learning and wisdom, as indicated by its name '*Vēdapuram* or *Vēdapuri*' for its *Vēdic* culture. Evidently, one can witness numerous temples dedicated to various deities. Besides that, is said to be one of the greatest *Siddha Kśētras,* where many Siddhas lived and performed their miracles and also attained their *Samādhi*. Among them Swāmy Siddhānantha, Mahān Badē Sāhib, Sri Aurobindo, etc. are still celebrated as great Siddhas. It is believed that even today those great Siddhas and Saints are living in this place in various forms. In relation to these Siddhas, there are many folk tales and legends popularly spread over the region. For instance, it is glorified in a local tradition that, Gōrakṣa stayed and performed '*Tapa*' and attained '*Siddhi*' at Kōrkādu village of Puduchērry, therefore the village is named after him as 'Kōrakar *Kādu'* and later come to the current corrupted form 'Kōrkādu'.

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[51] V. Ramachandra Dikshitar, *Op.cit*, p. 162

[52] Puduchērry as a political entity appears only after 16th century, but was a part of ancient Tamiḻagam (Toṇdaimaṇdalam), Bāhūr (Vāhūr) in this region is having the Pallava copper plate inscription describing it as *Vēdapuri*.

But prior to this, the *tāntric* cult in art form is found in almost all medieval temples of Puduchērry, viz., Bāhūr, Madagadipaṭṭu, Tirubuvanai, Tiruvaṇdārkōil. For instance, on the pillars of the *mahāmaṇdapa* of Śri Mūlanāthar temple of Bāhūr there are many mid-relief sculptures of Matśyēndranātha, Vyālinātha, Bhairava, *yōgic* postures, representation of *Bhairavi Cakra*. Besides, few other sculptures of the *tāntric* rites are also found in the Madagadipaṭṭu Śri Kuṇdānkuḻi Mahādēvar temple, Tiruvaṇdārkōil Śri Pañcanadī śvara temple.

Among the temples of Puduchērry, Villianūr Tirukāmēśvara temple remains as the most prominent remnant of Vijayanagara rule in the region[53]. In the Tirukāmēśvara temple of Villianūr, large numbers of such *tāntric* sculptures are depicted with fine craftsmanship. On pillar reliefs, are found the sculptures of Mīṉanātha (seated on a fish), Gōrakṣanātha (seated on a tiger) and Vyālinātha (seated on a mythical creature known as *Vyāli)* and other such six sculptures of the Navanātha group. Besides them, many *tāntric* images representing the cult of *Bhairavi cakrā*[54], and images depicting various *yōga sādhanās* of Nātha-Siddhas were largely found in different parts of the temple which are datable to the Vijayanagara period.

The word *Siddham*

If the Siddhas can be identified from the early medieval period, the evolution of their philosophical tenets seems to have a much earlier beginning. According to *Śvētaśvatara Upaniṣad*, the Siddhas are those who possessed from birth the "superhuman" powers, as also of "knowledge and indifference to the world"[55]. *Vāyu Purāṇa* also describes Siddhas by grouping[56] them with *Devariṣis*, *Pannagas, Yakśas*,

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[53] The presiding deity, *Kāmēśvara,* was installed during the early Cōḻa period. Except the *Garbhagriha*, all structural additions of this temple belong to the Vijayanagara and post Vijayanagara period.

[54] "The worship of Śakti is centered chiefly in mystic circle known as *Bhairavī Tantra*. It is otherwise called *Cakrapūjā*, in which there was free and unrestricted use of liquor, meat and woman. In Rajasekhara's play *Karpūramañjari*, the master magician, Bhairavānanda declares that he is an adherent of the *Kaula* way, drinks with and enjoys women and so goes forward to salvation. The *Kaulācāryas* did not observe any restrictions regarding food, drink and caste. In the *Bhairavi Cakra* or the circle of *Bhairavi* where *Kaulas* gathered to worship Śakti, all castes were admitted, meat of every sort excepting perhaps beef was allowed, and every worshipper was required to contract a marriage which was to last to the end of the gathering. In the literature of medieval Āndhra, we come across terms like *Bhairavaitantra*, *Bhairavayogini* and *Yoginicakra"*. B.S.L. Hanumantha Rao, *Op.cit*, p. 292.

[55] K.V. Ramakrishna Rao, *A Critical Study of the Chronology of Siddhas*, http://www.Hinduwebsite.com/ hinduism/essays/siddhas.asp. he quoted from *Śvētaśvatara Upaniṣad*, Chapter I, Verses, 3, 5, 7

[56] *Ibid*., quoted from *Vāyu Purāṇa*, Chapter 41, verses 66-73

Gandharvas, Kinnaras etc. The *kēsin* referred to in the *Rg Vēda* is very similar to Siddhas.

In the early centuries of Christian era, it became customary to use the Prakrit word *siddham* (meaning ‘successes or ‘successful’) or its abbreviations at the beginning of an inscription or in the left margin[57]. The word *siddham* often stands by itself on the margin and the *Svaśtika* appears after the word *siddham*[58]. Sometimes, the word *siddham* or its symbol was followed by one or more verses in praise of various deities. These auspicious symbols appear for first time in the Nāsik Cave inscription of the time of the Sātavāhana king Kṛśṇa and in the Hathigumphā inscription of Khāravēla, belonging to the last quarter of the first century B.C. and the beginning of the first century C.E.

With the expansion of the Gupta Empire, the currency of ‘*siddham*’ extended over the entire North and the East of India. The word ‘*siddham*’ had an equivalent symbol - **‘כ’** - and frequently both the word and the symbol were used together[59]. This formula (*siddham*) became so respectable and widely current that it still survives in the orthodox style of even private letters addressed to a superior.

In the inscriptions, invocations were addressed to the God, deities, *Tīrthaṅkarās, Buddhas, Arhatas, Siddhas*, saints etc. in order to seek their presence as a witness to the deeds executed in the records and to pray for their help and blessings for the successful completion of the undertakings[60]. The earliest invocation occurs in the Hathigumphā cave inscription of Khāravēla in the following simple form: *Namo arhantanam* (salutation to the *Arhatas*) and *namo savasiddhanam* (salutation to all the *Siddhas*). The Mandasor Stone Inscription of the Sātavāhanas and the Kśaharatas found at Junar, Mahad, Kud, Karle, Shelarwadi, and Nasik of the time of Kumaragupta II (C.E. 436 and C.E. 473) contains a long and glowing invocation to

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[57] Richard Salomon, *Indian Epigraphy: A Guide to the Study of Inscriptions in Sanskrit, Prakrit and the other Indo-Aryan Languages*, Munshiram Manoharlal, 1998, pp.67-68

[58] G. Buhler, *Indian Epigraphy: From About B.C.350 to About C.E. 1300*, Eastern Book House, Patna, 1987, pp. 108-109.

[59] It was used like that in the Mathura Stone Inscription of the time of Huviśka. For further details see *Epigraphia Indica,* (henceforth *EI*), Vol. XXI, pp.60f.

[60] Raj Bali Pandey, *Indian Paleography* (Part I) Motilal Banarasidas, Varanasi, 1957, p.149.

the Sun and the Siddhas[61]. Similarly at Aracchalur[62] of South Tamiḻnādu, an inscription with Brāhmi characters was found. The first letter of the first line begins with a circle and dot inside it. This indicates *tha* in the Brāhmi script. However, here this represents the word like *maṅgala* or *siddham*. Scholars like M. Raju, Seeni Venkataswami, Sri Pal and T.V. Mahalingam dates this inscription as 3rd or 4th century C.E[63].

The word *Siddhar* is found in the literary work *Tirumandiram*[64]. The Siddhar of this period is entirely different from the Siddhar of the later period in different aspects. However, the word is not found in the *Nikaṇdus*[65], except *Piṅgalanthai*[66]. Evidently such group must have originated only after the *Nikaṇdu* period i.e. 13th-14th centuries. Even *Agarāthi*, *Abidhana*, *Vadamālai nikaṇdus* of 19th century too do not mention the word '*Siddhar*'. However, the word *Siddham* is used to denote Śiva and as well as Buddha. Besides, the word, *Siddham* denoting to knowledge is used only once in *Paripādal*[67]. Therefore, Ramakrishna Rao[68] opined that the nomenclature Siddha, Siddha literature, Siddha system of medicine etc, are of later origin perhaps belonging to 17th – 19th centuries.

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61 "*May the Sun, the cause of the origin and destruction of the world, protect you – who is worshipped by the hosts of gods for the sake of their maintenance and by the Siddhas* who *wish for higher accomplishments (and) by having the objects of their desire under their control as they long for liberation and by sages practicing with devotion strict penances, who are able to curse or to offer blessings".* See *ibid,* pp.150-153.

62 A village in Erode district of Tamiḻnādu lies in the Erode - Kāṅgēyam road, about 12 miles from the Erode town. There is a low lying hill called Nāgamalai near the village which contains a natural cavern at the height of about 60 feet from the surrounding area. It is locally called Āṇdippārai. In this are found three rock beds with inscriptions.

63 T.V. Mahalingam, *Early South Indian Paleography*, University of Madras, Madras, 1974, pp.290-7

64 There are different opinions among the date of *Tirumandiram* and its author Tirumūlar. Scholars, so far assigned different dates. Presently it varies from 3000 BCE to 4th/5th Centuries CE.

65 The lexicographical books in Tamiḻ are called *Nikaṇdus*. The first full-fledged lexicon in Tamiḻ is *Divākaram* of Divākarar.

66 *Piṅgalanthai*, 92. *Piṅgalanthai* is the second *Nikaṇdu*. It is more elaborate than *Divākaram*. M. Arunachalam dates Piṅgalar to 900-1000 C.E. see M. Arunachalam, *An Introduction to the History of Tamil Literature*, Gandhi Vidyalayam, Tiruchitrambalam, 1974, p.342

67 *Paripādal* is one of the eight works of *Saṅgam* literature which is classified as *Eṭṭuttohai* or eight anthologies. It contains only musical pieces. Out of the traditional 70 songs, only 22 songs have survived which give the names of 13 composers and 10 musicians. The songs are composed on Muruga, Tirumāl, the Vaigai and the city of Madurai. *Paripādal* is dated between 100 and 200 C.E. See M. Arunachalam, *op.cit*, pp.39, 56 and 341.

68K.V. Ramakrishna Rao, *Op.cit*.

Siddhas, Siddhar and Cittar

The terms *Siddhas, Siddhar, Sittar* and *Cittar* were variously used by the Western and Indian scholars, but each of them has specific connotation in Tamiḻ. *Siddhar* means perfected or realized saint. *Sittar* implies an expert in occultism, alchemy and so on with magic or superstitious power. *Cittar* also connotes the same however exhibiting such powers with mind. It may be noted that the differentiation arises due to the understanding and interpretation of the Tamiḻ words *siddhu* (miracle, supernatural performance, etc.) and *cittu* (connected with mind and mental powers). In this work the word '*Siddha'* is used for the group of saintly people, who flourished between 14th to 19th centuries. Incidentally, they coincide with their Sanskrit counterparts[69]. The *Lexicon of Tamil Literature* defines that the term *Cittar* as derived from the Sanskrit word '*Siddha*' which means miraculous, supernatural, magic power. It has a vague designation of at least three groups of Tamiḻ authors known as alchemists or physicians who composed in Tamiḻ vast literature in prose and verse[70].

The *Tiruvāvaduturai Purāṇam* speaks of the Siddhas as those who are rich in knowledge[71]. According to *Vāṉmīki cūttira ñāṉam* 3, "by purifying the mind and attaining perfection one becomes a *cittaṉ* (Siddha). He is indeed fit to be called Śiva"[72]. Tiruvaḷḷuvar in his *Tirukkuṟaḷ* refers to the Siddhas by the word *Aṛivar*. The *Aṛivar* or the *Aṛavōr* were in all probability the people described by the *Tirukkuṟaḷ* as '*Nīttār'* or 'those who have renounced'. Chapter 3 of *Kuṟaḷ* itself named as '*Nīttār Perumai*' means 'The Greatness of Ascetics'. All the ten verses (couplets) of this chapter are dedicated to the ascetics, those who are renounced. It says that,

The settled rule of every code
Requires, as highest good,
Their greatness who, renouncing all
true to their rule have stood [73].

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[69] *Cit* = the principle of universal intelligence or consciousness; *Citta* = mind-stuff; sub-conscious mind; *Siddh* = realised, perfected, thus, Siddha is a perfected yogi; *Siddhi* = perfection, attainment, psychic power; *Siddhānta* = established tenet or doctrine. Swami Sivananda, *Yoga Vedanta Dictionary*, Rishikesh, 1950, pp. 33, 89

[70] Kamil V. Zvelebil, *Lexicon of Tamil Literature*, E.J. Brill, Leiden, 1995, pp. 165-66

[71] *Ibid*.

[72] *ciṟantu maṉat teḷivākic cērntōn cittaṉ, civaciva avaṉavaṉeṉ ṛuraikkālāmē.* Quoted by Kamil V. Zvelebil, *The Smile of Murugan on Tamil Literature of South India*, E.J. Brill, Leiden, 1973, p. 225

[73] *Tirukkuṟaḷ*, G.U. Pope, (Trans.), Tamiḻ University, Thanjavur, 1988, *Nīttār Perumai*, (chapter III), verse. 1

Further, the *Kuṟaḷ* says that the *nīttār* (ascetics) set an example to the world.

> *The might of men whose word*
> *is never vain,*
> *The 'secret word' shall*
> *to the earth proclaims*[74].

One of the *Saṅgam* literary works, *Tolkāppiyam* refers to the Siddhas as *aṟivar*. They were supposed to know the past, the present and the future[75]. Saint Tirumūlar himself says in his work *Tirumandiram,* that those who live in *Yōga* and see the divine power and light through *Yōga* are the Siddhas. He is an experimental *yōgin* who attains perfection by the method of self-effort. As *yōgins,* the Siddhas are said to have the triple control-the control of breath, the control of the passions and desires and the control of mind. A Siddha is one who has succeeded in stabilizing these controls in oneself and one who maintains equanimity and a sense of equilibrium. He also defines the Siddhas are those 'who have experienced divine light (*oḷi*) and divine power (*catti*, Skt. *śakti*) from within and through *Yōgic Samādhi*'[76].

> Tirumūlar presents a clear definition of the Siddhas: "*Impeccable, Immaculate Ones, Siddhas are they that have "gone thither" –beyond good and evil; they have reached the very shores of knowledge; the Siddhas are ever free even as Śiva himself! Cooled and composed are their "fires" indeed! "Blessed Immortals, Holy Virgins, liberated from the action-influence of the thirty-six Tattvas. Siddhas are they who have arrived at the City of God (Śiva) here and now! Discovered have they within themselves the Logos and their original-fount where they are ultimately resolved!" "Siddhas are they who have realised Śiva, realised the Eternal Gnosis! Siddhas are indeed the "transfigured ones;" of the White Brotherhood, and harmonised to*

[74] *Tirukkuṟaḷ*, *Nīttār Perumai*, (chapter III), Verse 8, (Kuṟaḷ-28)

[75] '*Maṟuvil mūvahaikkālamum neṟiyin Āṟṟiya Aṟivar*' (one who knows the past, present and future) Tolkkāpiyam, Porul Athikāram, verse. 75; N. Subrahmanian, *Sangam Polity*, Ennes Publications, Madurai, 1980, p. 275. V. Ramachandra Dikshitar says, "*a siddha was an inspired seer who had a vision to read not only the past and the present, but who could also read the future. He is ordinarily called a Siddha Vaidyan even to-day*" T.N. Ganapathy (2003), *The Yoga of Siddha Boganathar*, p.2

[76] *Tirumandiram*, Verse No. 1463 (*Yōga samādhiyin uḷḷē yakalitam;Yōga samādhiyin uḷḷē yuḷarōli;Yōga samādhiyin uḷḷē yuḷaśakti; Yōga samādhi yukantavar cittarē Tirumandiram)* and 1490; see T. N. Ganapathy, (2003), *Op.cit*, p.2; and also Kamil V. Zvelebil, (1973), *Op.cit.,* p. 225; see also David Gordon White, *The Alchemical Body*, *Op.cit*, p.61.

the rhythm of the Divine Creative Movement, they ever belong to the Land of the Celestials"[77].

From Tirumūlar's point of view, the life of a true Siddha is the life of perfect harmony. In it all contradictions and contrasting dualities or multiplicities lose their sharp edges and are harmonised, unified and synthesized as integral aspects of the one Life; absolute freedom from all tensions-from physical limitations caused as it were by the body-configuration of dense corporeal form, from the oppressive sense of duty born of morality as conceived by the public, as obtaining in the lower, lesser unevolved planes of existence, the commonplace morals of good and evil, the many do's and don'ts, freedom even from the tension involved in "knowledge," constituted as it is of the subject-object relations and therefore, resting for their very existence on the "categories"—for, the Siddhas have "gone thither" and reached the shores of Knowledge[78].

Siddhas are those who have seen civam.
Though coming into contact with śuddha –aśuddha (māyās)
They are not subjected to their influence.
They are liberated; they are also the source of liberation
They are an embodiment of energy residing in the mūlādhāra
They partake of the nature of Sadāśiva[79].

"A Siddha is one who has realized" the non-duality of *jīva* (the psyche) and Śiva. He is one who has realized Śiva in himself. He is said to have attained *Śivāṉubhava*. *Śivāṉubhava* stands for the state of experiencing the non-duality or oneness between the experiencing *jīva* and Śiva[80].

The Siddhas are the great human teachers who attained *aṣtasiddhis*[81] (powers) through their *yōgic* practices. These eight supernatural powers of the Siddhas are also

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[77] S.A. Sarma, *Tamil Siddhas: A Study from Historical, Socio-Cultural and Religio-Philosophical Perspectives*, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 2007, pp. 25-26

[78] *Ibid*.

[79] *Tirumandiram* – 2526. For English version see Maithily Thayanithy, *The Concept of Living Liberation in the Tirumantiram*, Ph.D Thesis, Centre for the Study of Religion, University of Toronto, 2010, p. 36.

[80] T.N. Ganapathy, (2003), *Op.cit*., p.2

[81] The *aṣtasiddhis* are 1.*Anima* (power of becoming the size of an atom and entering into smallest life), 2. *Mahima* (power of becoming mighty and co-extensive with the universe), 3. *Laghima* (capacity to be light though big in size), 4. *Garima* (capacity to be heavy though seeming small in size), 5. *Prapthi* (capacity to enter all the worlds), 6. *Prakāmyam* (power of transmutation and enjoying what he wants), 7. *Isithvam* (having the creative power of god and control over the heavenly elements), and 8.

elaborately described in the '*Siddhar Kaṇam*' of Saint Tāyumāṉavar. He had sung nearly ten songs, in which many of the names of the Siddhas are mentioned by him[82]. These *Siddhis* are powers either attained by birth (as the result of previous merit, earlier positive *karma)*, or by alchemical means, by power of words (*mantra*), or by mortification coupled with proper training and thorough concentration. However, a true Siddha is supposed to overcome the temptation of these *Siddhis*[83].

Mircea Eliade says that the Siddhas are those 'who understood liberation as the conquest of immortality'[84]. While defining the Tamiḻ Siddhas and their poetries, M. Arunachalam said that, "Generally the Cittar were persons of mystic experience who sang of such experience, who spoke in a popular language of that experience. Their mystic expression is often obscure"[85].

According to Kamil V. Zvelebil, "A Siddha or Mahāsiddha is an *yōgin* who has acquired siddha, that is, 'power, prowess, strength, ability'. From the technique of acquiring such power or powers, and from the description of these powers, it is obvious that the 'power' or 'powers' meant are occult, miraculous, supernatural, magic; that is, extraordinary abilities which normal man, a non-Siddha, does not possess"[86]. He also says that the designation '*Siddha*' is also a name of a sect in North India partly synonymous with *Nātha*[87] and in Buddhism it denotes a class of saints who have attained *Siddhi* or perfection in *Tāntric* rites. In Jainism, this term is equivalent to the designation *tīrthaṅkara*[88]. However, in the context of South Indian Tamiḻ culture, the Siddhas (*cittar*) are those who have attained the eight great supernatural powers (*aṣtasiddhis*), use their achievement in medical cure and/or alchemy, and express their views and doctrine in prose and verse composed in Tamiḻ.

Vasithvam (power of attracting others or control over kings and gods). T.N. Ganapathy (2004), *Op.cit*, p. 15; also see N.N. Bhattacharyya, *Op.cit.*, p. 280

[82] *Tāyumāṉavar Pāṭalkaḷ*, (Hymns of Tāyumāṉavar:in Tamiḻ, Dharmapura Āthinam Edition,1965, verses 57-66.

[83] K.V. Zvelebil, *The Poets of the Powers,* London, 1973, p.60

[84] Mircea Eliade, *Op.cit.*, p. 302

[85] M. Arunachalam, 'Literary Heritage – Medieval Period', in S.V. Subramanian and V. Veerasami (eds.), *Cultural Heritage of the Tamils*, International Institute of Tamiḻ Studies, Madras, 1981, p. 19.

[86] K.V. Zvelebil, *Op.cit*, 1973, p.60

[87] The term Nātha literally means 'lord'. Here often used to denote the saints/*yōgis* of the *Tāntrik* cult, particularly in Northern India; See B. Walker, *Hindu world,* London, 1968, Vol. 2, p.128.

[88] *Tīrthaṅkara*, the usual name of the 24 salvation-preachers or chief saints of Jainism of whom the last (Mahāvīra) was a historical person.

K.A.N. Sastry claims that the Tamiḻ Sittars (the Perfected Ones) and their teachings may well have been the outcome of Muslim and Christian influences in Hindu thought and practice"[89]. M.S. Purnalingam Piḷḷai notes that alchemical transmutation was their main achievement. He claims that the Siddha School of medicine and healing consisting of *maṇi*, *mantra* and *ausadha*, has been proved to be far earlier than the Sanskrit *Āyurvēdic* tradition of medicine. He further notes that Itaikkādar, another Siddha and friend of Tiruvaḷḷuvar, was present at the siege of Karur by the Cōḻa king Kiḷḷi Vaḷavan. He was a contemporary of Kulaśekhara Pāṇdyan and friend of Kapilar. Itaikaḻi Nadu was probably his native land[90].

Rev. Caldwell in his *Comparative Grammar of Dravidian Languages* classifies Tamiḻ Siddhars as belonging to the anti-Brahminical school. He finds Christian influence in the writings of the Siddhas, implying that the term *aṉbu* or Love is to be found only in Christian teachings. Caldwell holds that the Siddha Koṅkaṇar came from the neighbourhood of Goa, where such Christian influence is to be found; but Rahul Sankirtyayan in a list maintains that one Koṅkaṇapāda alias Koṅkalipa was a *Sūdra* from Magadha country[91]. Caldwell's cursory mention of Siddhas[92] is clearly distinguished by an uncharacteristic casualness, which together with his Christian bias, results in a distortion of historical perspective and a lack of insight into the original works, such of these studies to date seems based more on hearsay than on honest evaluation of their teachings.

Thus, from the above sources, a Siddha may be defined as a person who has attained divinity and achieved a state of spiritual enlightenment or mystical self-realisation. He is a complete one, fulfilled and accomplished; a God-realised being alive in the world for the sake of mankind and all living beings[93]. In fact, all *yōgins* who attained 'perfection' can be called Siddhas; but the term Siddhas (Tamiḻ *Cittar*)

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[89] K.A.N. Sastry, *Development of Religion in South India*, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1992, p. 95-96.

[90] M.S. Purnalingam Pillai, *Tamil Literature*, Tamiḻ University, Thanjavur, 1985, pp. 262-265

[91] S.A. Sarma, *Op.cit*, p. 25

[92]Rev. Caldwell, *Comparative Grammar of Dravidian Languages,* Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, New Delhi, 1974.

[93] T.N. Ganapathy, (2004), *Op.cit.*, p.13

is indeed derived from the term *Siddhi* or 'miraculous, magical power', and hence the perfection in question is primarily magical perfection[94].

Characteristic Features of the Tamil̠ Siddhas

In the Tamil̠ region, the origin of the Siddha cult is not authentically dated but can be related to the earliest form of Śaivism i.e, the Pāśupata School of Śaivism. It evolved along different lines but parallel to *āgamic* Śaivism, to the extent of their leading exponent Tirumūlar of the 8th century C.E. being accepted as one of the 63 Śaiva saints (Nāyaṇmārs)[95]. The Siddhars on the other hand had an older origin and a vast following in Tamil̠nādu. They were mainly Śaivites as the *Tirumantiram* and other Siddhar writings will show.

The eclectic school of mystics who often in addition to their opposition to the degenerate religion made fun of the outward formalities became popular as Siddhas in Tamil̠ land. These siddhas are probably to be identified with worshippers of the *nirguṇa* Brahman. They believed in *yōga* and *tantra* as well as in medicine for the suffering humanity. Here their religious mysticism becomes one with ethical mysticism. The eclectic school is very old in Tamil̠ land with its relationship with *Tāntric* schools of Śaivism, the Nātha pantha and other such religious sects of India[96].

T.N. Gaṇapathy extracted the essences from the songs of the Tamil̠ Siddhars and gives a detailed description of characteristic features of the Tamil̠ Siddhas. He states that, "A characteristic feature of the Tamil̠ Siddha is his declaration of the oneness of man with God. Tirumūlar says that for a man with a clear vision that is for Siddha *jīva* is Śiva. He is a Siddha who sees Śiva in every *jīva*". Another notable feature that we find among the Tamil̠ Siddhas is the total absence of any local cult of the deity. They are not believers in one local deity. No genuine Siddha in Tamil̠nādu including Tirumūlar, has sung in praise of any local deity or God or personal God. This is a feature that distinguishes Siddhas form other Saints, especially Ālvārs and

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94 K. V. Zvelebil, *Op.cit*, 1973, p.27

95 N. Subrahmanian, *The Tamils: Their History, Culture and Civilisation*, Institute of Asian Studies, Madras, 1996, p. 107

96 T.P. Meenakshisundaran, *Papers on Linguistics and Literature*, Annamalai University, Annamalainagar, 1965, pp. 121-22

Nāyaṇmārs[97]. According to Śivavākkiyar, a Siddha does not worship any deity in the temple[98]. Pāmbāṭṭiccittar also says that those who have built temples for local Gods and have offered prayers are those who do not get at the feet of the real Lord[99]. Probably the Tamiḻ Siddhas did not worship any deity or go to temples just to dissociate themselves from the *vāmācāra* tradition. *Tēvāram* makes a distinction between a *bhakta* and a *Siddha* and says that a man who is making a sincere attempt to seek God is a *bhakta* and a man who has attained and understood Godhead is a Siddha[100]. According to Paṭṭiṇattār, a Siddha is one who roams like a ghost, who rests like a dead body, who eats like a dog whatever is offered by way of food, who moves like a fox, who respects all women as his mother, who treats everyone as a friend, and who is like a child[101]. All the Tamiḻ Siddhars were described as masters of *Yōgic* exercises, *Aṣta siddhis*, performers of miracles and some of them are praised as expert doctors of Siddha medicine.

Their Number

In the pan–Indian context, the number of Nātha Siddhas is standardized as nine. But the names of the nine nāthas (*navanāthas*) vary significantly from region to region indifferent textual descriptions. In the Tamiḻ region the nine 'cittars' are worshipped besides the more popular eighteen Siddhars (*Pathinēn Siddhar*)[102]. They are Karūr Siddhar, Pulippāṇi Siddhar, Pāmbāṭṭi Siddhar, Kuthambai Siddhar, and Ahappēi Siddhar. Agasthiyar, Pulasthiyar, Tēraiyar, Yūkimuṉi, Macchamuṉi,

97 T.N. Ganapathy, (2004) *Op.cit.*, p.19

98 *Aṇtarkōn iruppitam aṛintuṇarntha ñānikaḷ;paṇdaṛintha pāṉmaithannai yār aṛiya vallarō? viṇḍavēdap pōrulaiyanṟi vēṛukūṛa vagaiyilak;kaṇdakōvil dēivamenṟu kaiyēḍuppa tillaiyē* : *Śivavākkiyar Pāṭalkaḷ*, verse 25

99 Like a picture of a calabash won't work for curry; Even if they roam around in all the eight directions; They won't attain Release; Building a temple in every land, and doing daily worship, They don't see the Lord's feet, dance, snake! Dance! *Pāmbāṭṭiccittar Pātal*, verse No. 94; Translation in English by David C. Buck, dance, snake! Dance!, A Writers Workshop Publication, Calcutta, 1976, p.109

100 T.N. Ganapathy, (2004), *Op.cit.*, p.20

101 *Pēypōltirinthu piṇampōl kiḍantitta picchaiyēllām //Nāipōl arundhi naripōl uḷḷṉṛu naṇmaṅgaiyaraith Thāipōl karuthi thamarpōl aṉaivarkkum thaḻmai sollich // Sēipōl iruppakkaṇḍīr uṉmaiñānam tēḷintavarē*. *Paṭṭinattār Pātal-119*, (*Podu Pātalkaḷ*- No.35)

102 but there is no any authentic account of their works nor is there any historical material about their lives A.V. Subramania Aiyar, *The Poetry and Philosophy of the Tamil Siddhars, An Essay in Criticism,* Tirunelveli, 1957, pp. 1-2

Saṭṭaimuṉi, Nanti, Mūlar, Chandikesar, Itaikkātar, Kapilar, Pusuṇdamuṉi, Rōmariṣi- these were of ancient times[103].

Similarly, another tradition enumerates Eighteen Tamiḻ Cittars viz., Akattiyar, Bōgar, Kōrakkar, Kailācanātar, Caṭṭaimuṉi, Tirumūlar, Nanti, Kūṇkaṇṇar, Maccamuṉi, Vācamuṉi, Kūrmamuṉi, Kamalamuṉi, Itai kātar, Puṇṇākkīcar, Cuntarānantar, Urōmariṣi, Piramamuṉi. Yet another tradition speaks of 9 Siddhars such as Cattiyanātar, Catōkanātar, Ātinātar, Ānātinātar, Vekulinātar, Mataṅkanātar, Maccēntiranātar, Katēntiranātar, Kōrakanātar. Often, the following semi-legendry persons like Taṉvaṇtiri, Pulastiyar, Pucuṇtar, Karuvūrār, Irāmatēvar, Tēraiyar, Kapilar are also classified as Siddhars. However in Tamiḻ literature, the following poets are also included in Siddha group namely, Akappēy, Aḻukuṉi, Civavākkiyar, Ēnāti, Itaikkātar, Kālai, Katuveli, Kutampai, Pāmbāṭṭi, Paṭṭinattār and Pattirakiri. These poets have in common unorthodox or even iconoclastic and revolutionary views and the use of, usually simple, almost colloquial diction and vigorous imagery[104].

However, the Tamiḻ literary tradition contain different lists of the 18 Siddhars and even more, which might have been created due to the local conditions (See Appendix 1).

Review of Literature

A review of literature is a pre-requirement to identify research works already undertaken in the area of study; to understand different perspectives of research, in the interpretation of the siddha cult, philosophy, rituals and methods of worship. This part of the thesis presents a panoramic view of such works related to the Siddha cult in general and Tamiḻnādu in particular.

N. N. Bhattacharyya's[105] *History of the Tantric Religion*, is an erudite and scholarly masterpiece, which is a solid study of the *Tāntric* religion. A lengthy survey of Indian *tāntric* literature; external influences and interactions on *Tāntrism*; the Primitive substratum which entertains the *Vāmācāra* practices, the role of women in *Tāntric* cults, social significance of the sex rites, fertility beliefs, initiation and so on;

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[103] M.S. Purnalingam Pillai, *Op.cit*, pp.262-266

[104] Kamil V. Zvelebil, *Op.cit*, 1995, pp. 165-66

[105] N. N. Bhattacharyya, *History of the Tantric Religion*, Manohar, New Delhi, 1982

Tāntrism and the earlier forms of Indian Religious systems from pre-*Vēdic*, *Vēdic* and post-*Vēdic* times; *Tāntric* Ideas and Practices in Medieval Religious systems such as the medieval Vaiṣṇavism, Southern Śaivism, Vīraśaivism, Kaśmīra Śaivism, Śaktism and the Atimārgika sects like Kāpālikas, Kālamukhas, Mattamayūras, and with the Gāṇapatyas and the Smārta Pañcopāsanā; *Tāntrism* in relation to the religion of the masses like Lokāyata tradition; the *tāntric* substratum of Śaktism, the functional aspects of the *Śākta tantras*, the *Sat-cakras* and its conceptual transformation, the deities, mantras and letters-their position in the *Cakras*, *yōgic* exercises and awakening of *Kuṇdalini*, *Raseśvara Darśana*, the deities related to the Śakta *Tāntrism* and their philosophies were thoroughly discussed in this book.

J. N. Farquhar[106] in his work "*An outline of The Religious Literature of India"* gives a brief account of Sittars in a separate title. In that work he mentions about the Tamiḻ Siddhas as follows. "There was a Śaiva school in Tamiḻ-land, which held a monotheistic and Puritan creed, and roundly condemned idolatry. They are usually called the Chittars, or Sittars, i.e. *Siddhas*, Sages, but their history is not known. They seem to have been most active in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Ahappēy and Pāmbāṭṭi are believed to have been their chief singers. Many of the hymns of the Sittars are collected in the *Śiva-vākyam*, (Śiva's utterances), but orthodox lyrics have also crept in beside the pure material. On the other hand, a number of beautiful lyrics which show the Sittar spirit are mistakenly attributed to Paṭṭiṇattu Piḷḷai, the tenth-century poet. Tattuva Rāyar, who wrote in the seventeenth century a work against idolatry, *Adaṅgan-Muṛai*, was probably another leader".

The work "*Siddha-Siddhanta Paddhati and other works of the Nātha Yogis*" by Kalyani Mallik[107] dealt with the literary work *Siddha-Siddhanta Paddhati* of Gōrakṣanātha. This work also discussed the *Yōgavisaya* of Mīṉanātha, *Amaraugha Prabodha, Yōgamārtānda*, *Gōrakṣa Upaniṣad* of Gōrakṣanātha and other works like *Matśyēndraji-Ka-pada*, *Bharatharji-ki-Sabdi*, *Chirpatji-ki-Sabdi*, *Gopichandaji-ki-Sabdi* and *Jalandhari Paoji-ki-sabdi*. The above citied works are the original texts of the *Nātha Sampradaya* which are given in this book in Dēvanagiri script (Sanskrit)

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[106] J. N. Farquhar, *An outline of The Religious Literature of India*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1984 (rep), p.352

[107] (Mrs) Kalyani Mallik, *Siddha-Siddhanta Paddhati and other works of the Natha Yogis*, Poona Oriental Book House, Poona, 1954.

along with the summary of the contents of the original texts with critical comments. A short history of the *Nāthapantha* is also given by the author in this work. It also includes the legends about the origin of the sect, the historicity and date of Matśyēndranāth, and Gōraknāth, Bhartrhari, Jalandhranāth, Jñānēswar and Gambhirnāth and the historicity of Gōpichandra. The author also critically analysed the identical aspects of Matśyēndranāth, Mīṉanātha and Luipa with the help of their doctrines. The philosophical tenets of the sect and successive steps of their *Sādhana*, and also the texts belonging to the sect and their importance with its probable dates were given in detail.

The book entitled "*Mother Goddess in Indian Art, Archaeology and Literature*" by M.C.P. Srivastava[108], is a thesis that gives a detailed account on the cult of Mother Goddess in various places during various periods such as pre and proto-Historic period, *Vēdic* period, post-Indus and Pre-Mauryan period, Maurya-Suṅga, Kuśāna, Gupta and post-Gupta period. The book also explained the Mother Goddess in Hindu and Buddhist *Tantras*, the folk-Goddess, *tāntric* deities, *Śakti Pīthas* and rituals and festivals conducted during the worship of those Mother Goddesses. He states 'Kāli' as an important form of *Tāntric* Goddess and also says that *Cakrapūja* and *Pañcaṭṭava* are the important features of *tāntric* religion. This work also dealt with *Tāntric* Literature, *Tāntric Sādhana* and *Tāntric* traits.

Mircea Eliade's "*Yoga: Immortality and Freedom*" is originally a French work entitled "*Le Yoga Immoratalite et Liberte*" (1954), which was translated from French by Williard R. Trask. It is a work of formidable scholarship[109]. This work investigated into the Indian experimental mysticism known as *Yōga*. Discussions were made on the continuity of Indian thinking through Pre-Dravidian, Dravidian, and Aryan including classical and post-classical times in Brahmanism, Hinduism and Buddhism. The author makes clear that in *yōga* and in Hindu thought, the anxiety engendered by living in time is called *karma*, thought of as a process of causality that follows one through death to endless rebirths. The author delved deep into the typically Indian polarity of thought. Freedom and Immortality are understood by the author as new birth after, or even through, death and Liberation means the negation of the former

[108] M.C.P. Srivastava, *Mother Goddess in Indian Art, Archaeology and Literature*, 1979

[109] Mircea Eliade, *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom*, Williard R. Trask (Trans.), Routledge and Kegan Paul, Ltd., London, 1958

Self-not the culmination of individualism, but the extinction of the individual. Thus, this work is a complex one, and the *yōga* which is discussed in this is entirely different from the current *yōgic* practices. In the concluding part of this seminal work Eliade brings out in a nut shell the quintessence of Indian *Yōga* as "pan-Indian corpus of spiritual techniques… a reaction against metaphysical speculation and he excesses of a fossilized ritualism….represent the same tendency toward the concrete, toward personal experience…in the popular devotion expressed in *pūjā* and *Bhakti*".[110]

Shashibhushan Dasgupta's, '*Obscure Religious Cults*'[111] is a revised and extended work of the author's thesis. He divided this work into four parts and 14 chapters. The first part dealt with the Buddhist Sahajiya cult, its literary works, and history of Buddhism in Bengal, origin and development of *Tāntric* Buddhism and the ideas of *Mahayāna* to the *Tāntric* Buddhism; the philosophical stand point of the *carya-padas*; general religious outlook of the Sahajiyas, esoteric practices and *yōgic sādhanas* of the Sahajiyas. He dated the origin of the Nātha cult within the 9th-12th centuries C.E. and so on. In part II, the medieval Sahajiya schools such as Vaiṣṇava Sahajiya cult; the transition from Buddhist Sahajiya to Vaiṣṇava Sahajiya; its mode of transformation and *Sahaja Sādhana*; the Rasa school and Kaśmira Śaivism; the Bāuls of Bengal, their comparison with Sahajiyas, Sūfis are discussed. In Part III, the Nātha cult was discussed. The origin of the Nātha cult, the Siddha cult, their Rasāyana schools; confusion about the Nātha Siddhas and the Buddhist Siddhācāryās, the 84 Siddhas and the Nine Nāthas were also discussed. Whether sprung ultimately from Buddhism or Śaiva Hinduism; the author takes it to represent a phase of the Siddhas, a Śaiva school. It has included quite fantastic elements, and the highest objects of regard are, of course, the supernatural Nāthas. The religions of the Nātha Siddhas, the *aṣta Siddhi*, supernatural powers, *jīvan mukti*, *ulta sādhana*, *kāya sādhana* were discussed. The fourth part discusses the Dharma cult and Bengali literature, the general nature of the cult and practices of Muslims; the Hindu conception of Dharma, Yama and Buddhist Dharma are explained.

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[110] *Ibid*., p. 360-61.

[111] Shashibhusan Dasgupta, *Obscure Religious Cults*, Firma K.L. Mukhopdhayay, Calcutta, (2nd Edn), 1962

The Book "*Kāpālikas and Kālamukhās: Two Lost Saivite sects*" by David N. Lorenzen[112] is an example of original research in which he brings to light these two '*atimargika*' sects, through the analysis of the medieval literary and epigraphical sources from across the sub-continent. The book is divided into six chapters. In the first chapter it traces out the important four sects – *Śaivas, Pāśupatas, Kāpālikas* and *Kālamukhās* - and their descriptions in medieval Sanskrit texts. In the second and third chapters, the book analyses the sources both epigraphical and textual, for the study of the *Kāpālikas*, their cult and doctrine; the mudras of the *Kāpālikas*, their provenance, spread and survival in different parts of the subcontinent. In the fourth and fifth chapters, the book elaborately discussed and analysed the two schools of the *Kālamukhās* such as the *Śakti pariṣad* in the Karnātaka region and the *Simha Pariṣad* in the Āndhra regions, their subdivisions, temples, *maṭhas* and rituals, educational and political activities, on the basis of textual and inscriptional evidences. In the sixth chapter, the book analyse the *Pāśupata* and *Lakuliśa* sects. Lorenzen says that the *Pāśupatas* are the oldest of the four sects and there are many similarities between the *Pāśupatas* and *Lakuliśas.* In the revised edition of the book, he further add new discoveries of the Kāpālika and *Kālamukhā* inscriptional and literary sources brought out in the form of appendices at the end of the text. The *Kālamukhās* had their provenance in south India during 11th-13th centuries C.E, particularly in Karnātaka, Āndhra and Tamiḻnādu regions in that order of prominence.

"*The Tantric Tradition*" by Acehananda Bharati[113] discusses the philosophical context and terminology of the *tantra* with special reference to Tibet and India; pilgrimages, mantra, *Sandhābhāsā* (intentional language), *dīkṣā* (initiation), polarity symbolism and the *Sādhanā*. He opined that *tantra* is a "Psycho-experimental speculation". In addition, he maintains that the 'entire speculative apparatus' in the *tantra* is derived from non-*tantra* sources. This work discusses about the culmination of *tantra-sādhaka* as *pañcatattvam*, i.e., the 'Five Ms' or *Pañcamakāra*. This work is interesting and informative to know about the *Tāntric* traditions of India.

[112] Lorenzen David N. *Kāpālikas and Kālamukhas: Two Lost Saivite sects*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1972, (Rev.edn.1991).

[113] Acehananda Bharati, *The Tantric Tradition*, Rider and Company, London, 1965

"A Companion to Tantra" by S. C. Banerji[114], is one of the useful and concise books which provide a general view of the various conceptual undercurrents of *tantra*. Consisting of ten chapters and two appendices, this book speaks about the definition, meaning, origin and antiquity of the *tantra*, their number, and the broad form and content of the *tantras*; *tāntric* Śaivism of Kashmir, the different schools and sects of Śaivism and their philosophical leanings in that region; Science in *tantra*, metallurgy alchemy and medicine, music and dance, art and architecture and so on; and finally the authors of different *tantras* – Hindu, Śakta, Śaiva, Vaiṣṇava, Buddhist and Jaina and different commentaries on each of them.

Another book entitled *A Brief History of Tantra Literature* by S.C. Banerji[115] is a commendable treatise containing a detailed description of the concepts, philosophical components and contents of many *tāntric* texts. The book in nine chapters contains an elaborate discussion about the contents and classification of the *tantras*; brief description of different *tāntric* texts of Buddhist and Hindu pantheon; miscellaneous *tāntric* works and commentaries and *tāntric* lexicons etc. This book is the most essential one for any research on *tāntric* religion.

David Gordon White's[116], "*The Alchemical Body: Siddha Traditions in Medieval India*", is a primary work on alchemy, *tantra* and other esoteric traditions of medieval India. In this work, he distinguishes between Hindu and Buddhist alchemy. He affirms that *yōga* and alchemy were complementary and interpreting disciplines in which the Rasa-Siddhas and Nātha-Siddhas were closely linked in their practices. White also drew his attention towards the southern Rasa-Siddhas for better understanding of this subject. He was fascinated by the erotico-mystical side of *Tāntrism* and at times loses himself in the more sexually oriented interpretations of the nature of mercury and sulphur that are offered in certain *tāntric* texts. Besides, he clearly recognizes that the alchemical work itself is essentially concerned with the creation and intensification of an adamantine "body of light", and took precedence over gold-making in the practices of Siddha alchemists. At the end of this work, White describes about the Siddha legacy in Modern India and says that the goals of

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[114] S. C. Banerji, *A Companion to Tantra*, Abhinav publications, Delhi, 2007.

[115] S. C. Banerji, *A Brief History of Tantra Literature*, Calcutta, Naya Proksh,1988.

[116] David Gordon White, *The Alchemical Body: Siddha Tradition in Medieval India*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1996.

the *tāntric* practitioner were to remain immortality and unalloyed power in the world. Once possessed of this power, the practitioner may do anything what they wish, either positively or negatively.

R. Champakalakshmi and S. Gopal's (ed.)[117] work is a collection of fairly disparate essays in which, K. Meenakshi's "*The Siddhas of Tamil Nadu: A Voice of Dissent*", argues that it was the Tamiḻ Siddha movement and not the Bhakti movement that was the true inheritor of a long pan-Indian tradition of dissent in south India. But it failed to develop any alternative structures and was incorporated into the dominant tradition of *bhakti*. Meenakshi gives brief information about the Tamiḻ Siddhas like Tirumūlar, Śivavākkiyar, Paṭṭiṇattār and Pattiragiriyār as early Siddhas. She also records some information regarding the later Siddhas like Pāmbāṭṭicittar, Itaikkāttucittar, Akappēycittar, Kutampaicittar, Kātuvelicittar and Aḻukunicittar. This work deals with the socio-religious background of the Tamiḻ Siddhas, the Siddhas of North India and their voice of dissent in various forms.

In the book '*The Tantric Religion of India*' Apruba Chandra Barthakuria[118] gives a general introduction of *Tantra*. This study mainly focuses on Assam's *Tantra*. It also give details on Assam's *Yōgini Tantra* and also covers the historical and geographical importance of *Tantra* and the occult practices of Assam's *Tāntric* religion. The religious places of Vaiṣṇavas, the Śaivas and the Śaktas extending from Northern Bengal to Eastern Assam, the philosophical study of the *Yōgini tantra*, *Śākta* religion of Assam, *Kāmakhya tantra* are described. It also mentions about the *Dēvi Pūjā*, *Kumāri Pūjā*, *Tantra Sādhana*, *Sat Karma*, Bhairavi worship and Viṣṇu worship. Then the *pūjās* like *Kubēra pūjā*, fire worship, *Varuna pūjā* and description on *Kalikapurāṇa*, worshipping of various minor and *tāntric* deities, *Sādhakas* of *Divya*, *Vīra* and *Paśu* and five *makāras* are described according to Assam's tradition.

V.V. Ramana Sastri in an interesting paper "*The Doctrinal Culture and Tradition of the Siddhas*"[119] dealt with the philosophy and beliefs of the Siddhas in a

[117] R. Champalakshmi and S. Gopal (eds.), *Tradition, dissent and ideology: Essays in honour of Romila Thapar*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1996

[118] Apruba Chandra Barthakuria, *The Tantric Religion of India: An Insight into Assam's Tantra Literature*, Punthi Pustak, Kolkata, 2009

[119] Haridas Bhattacharya (ed.), *The Cultural Heritage of India,* Vol. IV, *The Religions*, The Ramakrishna Mission, Calcutta, 1956, pp. 300-308.

pan-Indian context. However this work gives only a superficial account about the Siddhas of Tamiḻnādu. This work clubs the Siddhas of the three schools (*Kāya Siddhas*, *Rasa Siddhas* and *Sanmārga Siddhas*), with the four Śaiva hymnal poets such as Avvaiyār, Muttutāṇḍavar, Aruṇagiri, Sīralan, etc. The writer's idea of Mahēśvara Siddhas is based on the concept of immortality held by Tāyumāṉavar and Rāmaliṅgar. Some times this work refers to Bōgar as a pre-Christian Taoist immigrant from China without substantiating the claim. Sastry outlines the salient features that distinguish the school of Tamiḻ Siddhars on the basis of comparative study of the Rasēśvara and the Mahēśvara schools, He is aware that the Tamiḻ Siddha alone provides a key to the mystery of life and death. Only the Tamiḻ Siddhars answer the question in the affirmative, claiming that death may be put off by a special course of rejuvenation (the view of the Rasēśvara school), or it may be ended by dematerializing and spiritualizing the body (the view of the Mahēśvara school)".

A.V. Subramania Aiyar's[120] *The Poetry and the Philosophy of the Tamil Siddhars: an Essay in Criticism* is a pioneering study on Siddha literature. Even today, most of the scholars who working on the Siddha literature and their cult, consider this as their primary source material for understanding the philosophy of the Tamiḻ Siddhars. He gives a reasonable answer for the question 'who is a Siddhar in Tamiḻ Literature?' And also define them as they 'have always been claimed to be seers and highly evolved and realized souls'. Aiyar gives a detailed description of the philosophical tenets of Tirumūlar which were derived from *Tirumantiram*, a masterpiece of *Yōga*, mystic and agamic lore by Tirumūlar by quoting his songs. This is followed by a detailed account on the poetry and the philosophy of the early Tamiḻ Siddhas like Śivavākkiyar, Paṭṭiṇathār, and Bhadragiriār. Besides, Aiyar classifies the period of the above Siddhars from 6th to 10th century C.E. He also listed the other famous Tamiḻ Siddhars like Pāmbāṭṭi Siddhar, Itaikāttu Siddhar, Ahappēy Siddhar, Kudambai Siddhar, Kaduveli Siddhar and Aḻuhuni Siddhar as later Siddhas, and determined their dates in between 11th and 16th century C.E. As a concluding remark, Ayiar says that 'the Siddhars have made a permanent and varied contribution to Tamiḻ Literature and have enriched it'. They introduced into Tamiḻ poetry not only the common speech but also an easy and flexible style. Particularly the poems of the later

[120] A. V. Subramania Aiyar, *The Poetry and the Philosophy of the Tamil Siddhars: an Essay in Criticism*, S. Mahadevan Publisher, Tirunelveli, 1957

Siddhars have been conceived and written for the masses, though portions relating to *yōga* and mystic symbolisms, which are found here and there, will not be easily understood by them. In addition to the above, Aiyar introduces three new philosophic poets viz. Saint Vāgisar, Kaṇṇudaya Vaḷḷalar and Tāṇḍavarāya Swāmigaḷ, whose songs have the vigorous poetic style and emphasize the general outlook and philosophy of the Siddhars, though they are not considered to be part of Siddha literature. He also says that 'the Siddhars were votaries of true religion and noble philosophy'. Their poetry was subsidiary to their religious life. Knowledge of the works of the Siddhars is necessary to have a correct perspective of the religious, social and literary history of the Tamils. The fiery onslaughts of the Siddhars were not able to shake the people in their belief in and loyalty to them.

One of the most valuable books for the study of the Tamiḻ Siddha cult is Kamil V. Zvelebil's[121] *The Poets of the Powers*. It is a reliable work on the Tamiḻ Siddhas who were a group of *tāntric yogins*, physicians, alchemists and magicians. They left behind considerable number of literary works. His' another book[122], *The Siddha Quest for Immortality*, is marginally concerned with Tamiḻ Siddhas as poets and with their writings as part of Tamiḻ literature. Generally, this book deals with the siddha preoccupation with medicine, healing and therapies, with sexual attitudes and *yōga*, as preserved and expressed in ancient texts composed in Tamiḻ as well as in the living practices of contemporary Siddha physicians. However, very often the poetry, writings and other literary works of early medieval and medieval Siddhas are discussed by the author in this work.

M. Arunachalam's[123], *An Introduction to the History of Tamil Literature*, is one of the earliest works which extensively dealt with the history of various Tamiḻ literary compositions. This work, divided into forty-seven chapters, starts with 'The Land and the People' and 'The Language and the Literature'. Most of the individual chapters have their own unity and sufficiency, whether they are about particular authors, works or about a group of poems or class of writing. Altogether the narrative exudes an impression of speed, amplitude, variety and significant detail. There is also

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[121] Kamil V. Zvelebil, *The Poets of the Powers*, Rider and Company, London, 1973

[122] Kamil V. Zvelebil, *The Siddha Quest for Immortality*, Mandrake of Oxford, Britain, 2nd Ed., 2003

[123] M. Arunachalam, *An Introduction to the History of Tamil Literature*, Gandhi Vidyalayam, Tiruchitrambalam, 1974.

chapter on the Lexicons, Ballads and Folk-songs, Tamiḻ scripts and Inscriptions. The modern period is merely touched upon towards at the end of the book. Pertaining to our area of study, this book discussed about the writings of the Tamiḻ Siddhas and said that 'there is quite a decent volume of Siddha literature in the Tamiḻ language and it will therefore be worthwhile to know the Siddha poets and their writing'. The songs of Tirumūlar have been collected into the Śaiva canon, but the poems of other Siddhas are said to have been collected into a handy volume known as the *Pathinen Siddhar jñāna kōvai*. He further says that the above 'volume is not real siddha poetry. There are in it large sections of modern writings in prose and verse which will hardly fit in with the Siddha writing'. He briefly discusses about the writings of Śivavākkiyar, Paṭṭiṇatār, Avvai, and other 'minor siddhas' who couched in obscure and mystic language viz., Pāmbāṭṭi Siddhar, Aḻuguni Siddha, Ahappēy Siddha, Kaduveli Siddha, Kutambai Siddha, Idaikkāṭṭu Siddha and Ēnādi Siddha. At the end of this work, Arunachalam gives a long list of chronology of the Siddhas and their literary compositions.

R. Venkatraman's[124] *A History of the Tamil Siddha Cult* is one book which provides the essential and basic information about the origin, evolution, general features of the Tamiḻ Siddha cult and its impact. The introductory part gives a brief sketch on the Siddha cult and the next chapter dealt with the various sources available in both Tamiḻ and non-Tamiḻ languages. The third chapter is about the origin of the Tamiḻ Siddha cult, in which the author says that 'the period of evolution would go back to Tamiḻ proto-historic times' which are later developed from different roots viz., the proto-historic native beginnings, the Kāpālika cult, the *Tāntric* Buddhism and the Nātha Siddha cult. He classified the Siddhas into three groups: the *Sanmārga*-Siddhas, the *Jñāna*-Siddhas and the *Kāya*-Siddhas and discusses its evolution in the fourth chapter. He also gave a chronological list of Siddhas in this chapter. The next deals with the features of the Tamiḻ Siddha cult that includes different philosophies of the above said three groups, and their religion, *yōga*, Siddha system of medicine, alchemy, beliefs and superstitions, social attitudes, their literature. The sixth chapter discusses the question of the current prevalence of a continuous tradition of the Siddhas and also examines the impact of the Siddhas on the Tamiḻ society in general. Finally he concludes that the Siddha cult is a mixture of exotic influences, borrowing

[124] R. Venkatraman, *A History of the Tamil Siddha Cult*, Ennes Publications, Madurai, 1990.

from other cults. At the same time, *Siddhism* and its medicine is becoming popular again as part of local revivalist movements. This work includes 34 appendixes which carries various additional details in relation to the Tami̲l Siddhas. From Appendix 2 to Appendix 5, he gave the list of Siddhas which are mentioned in different works, along with a list of councils in which the Siddhas associated with, as well as the list of their associated places. But this book did not make any attempt to remove the ambiguity about the chronology of the Tami̲l Siddhas.

T. N. Gaṇapathy's[125], *The Philosophy of the Tamil Siddhas*, is an excellent introduction to the philosophy and mysticism of the Tami̲l Siddhas. This work is a comprehensive one which consists of nine chapters including the introduction and the conclusion. These chapters cover the essentials of the philosophy and mysticism of the Siddhas. Many of the aspects of the Tami̲l Siddhas have been dealt with systematically in this book such as their heritage, their philosophical ideas and methods, their language style, and their social concern.

His another work[126] *The Contribution of the Tamil Siddhas to Dravidian Thought*, is a compilation of a series of lectures of the author on Tami̲l Siddhas. In lecture one, there are two chapters which deals with the general introduction about the Tami̲l Siddhas such as their features, traditions, religion, classifications, etc. Gaṇapathy classified the Siddhas into many different groups viz., Nātha Siddhas, Rasa-Siddhas, Mahēśvara-Siddhas and Saṅgata-Siddhas. The Rasa-Siddhas are medicine men while the Saṅgata-Siddhas are the Buddhist Siddhas. According to another classification, Siddhas fall under three categories or *varga* viz. *Bāla-varga*, *Mūla-varga* and *Kailāsa-varga*. While speaking about the number of Siddhas, he also accepts that 'there is no agreed view as to the exact number of Siddhas'. In lecture two, the author discuss about the unique contributions of the Tami̲l Siddhas to Dravidian thought, *tāntric* traditions, the *tāntric yōga sādhana* of the Tami̲l Siddhas with special reference to Tirumūlar and Bōgar; contribution of the Tami̲l Siddhas to the mysticism of the Dravidian culture, the philosophy of the human body, the twilight language of the Siddhas and also about their social concerns. Besides, this work also dealt with the classification of *Tantras*, distinctive features of the *Tantras*,

[125] T. N. Ganapathy, (2004), *Op.cit.*,

[126] T. N. Ganapathy, (2008) *The Contribution of the Tamil Siddhas to Dravidian Thought*, Dravidian University Kuppam

Śiva-Yōga, *Kuṇḍalini Yōga*, the *cakra* system, *prāṇāyāma*, *Bhandas* and *mudrās*, mantra and *mandala*, *yantra*, unique mystic expressions of the Tamil̲ Siddhas, *Sandhya Bhaśa*, the twilight element in the *pañca-makāra*, etc.

Another important book on the *Tamil Siddhas* is the one by S.A.Sarma[127]. In this book the author traces out the antiquity of the Tamil̲ Siddhars to the remote past and says that the previous researchers failed to understand the native element of the Tamil̲ Siddhars. He then discusses threadbare the songs of the Siddhars to analyse the philosophical under currents. This is followed by a biographical sketch of various siddhas such as Nandi, Tirumūla Nāyaṇar, Kañjamalai Siddhar, Agattiyar, Kudambai Siddhar, Kaduveli Siddhar, Kapilar, Avvaiyār, Tiruvaḷḷuvar and Siddha Rāmaliṅgam and analyse the conceptual apparatus of the Tamil̲ Siddhars.

Though there are many works available on *Tantra* and *Tāntrism*, very few works are dealing with the Siddha cult in general and Tamil̲ Siddhas in particular. Only such kinds of works are discussed in this review. However, besides these there are numerous works available in Tamil̲ on the Siddha Medicine as well as Tamil̲ Siddha cult which are also consulted for the present study. Most of those works are based on the legends and folk-tradition, fictions or carrying the imaginary narrations of the author without any authenticity. Therefore such kinds of works are not added in this review. However, some of the important historical elements found here and there in the Tamil̲ vernacular literature are utilized in the writing of this thesis.

Aims and Objectives

The Siddha cult giving emphasis to *yōgic* practices and attainment of *Siddha Dēha* becomes a part of the Śaiva sectarian faith and becomes institutionalized with the amalgamation of various *atimārgika* sects such as *Pāśupatas, Kāpālikas* and *Kālamukhās*. This spiritual and practical order was further strengthened by the *Nāthas* or *Kānphat yogis* during 10th-13th centuries in the process assimilating even the teachers and tenets of the Sūfi order. By 14th century, all the sectarian groups classified as *atimārgikas* merge together under the Nātha-Siddha tradition which becomes a pan-Indian tradition. Western India becomes the centre of Nātha-siddhas as indicated by a number of *siddha-kśētras* in Maharastra and Karnātaka regions,

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127 S.A.Sarma, *Op.cit*.

particularly in the river valleys of Godāvari, Kṛiśṇa and Tuṅgabhadra. The popularity of Nātha Siddhas among the elite and the lower sections of the medieval society can be understood through the textual references, which speaks about the *yōgic* practices, magical powers and performances of Nātha-Siddhas.

The sculptural representations of the Nātha Siddhas also seems to have begun from around 13th Century C.E as indicated by such individual sculptures of the Nātha Siddhas in Āndhra Pradesh[128], which contained the names of the Nāthas engraved on the pedestal portions. However, the Nātha Siddha sculptures become very popular in the Vijayanagara Art. Beginning from the Vijayanagara rule, these Nātha-Siddhas of Nava Nātha tradition began to be portrayed in the low relief sculptures on the pillars of the *maṇḍapas*, lower portions of the *Gōpuras*, in both Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava temples. Although scholars have relegated these representations as simple decorative motifs[129], their prolific occurrence in the every nook and corner of the Vijayanagara Empire indicate a deliberate attempt on the part of the schools of sculptors to popularize the Nātha-Siddhas. Although there are many studies on the teachings and philosophy of the Nātha Siddhas, none of them have studied the significance of the Nātha sculptural representations. These and other *tāntric* sculptures portray the rituals and cults of the Nātha-Siddha tradition; which permeates in the practices of the Siddhas of 18th and 20th centuries, particularly in Tami<u>l</u> region, which were glorified in the literary works and attracted the devotion of the popular masses.

Although a good number of studies in English and Tami<u>l</u> are available on the Tami<u>l</u> Siddhas, there were many discrepancies and contentious issues which need to be analyzed and probed into. The Siddha cult was not local to the Tami<u>l</u> region as very little inscriptional evidence is coming forth. Further, the Nava Nātha cult which is popular in other parts of the sub-continent does not seem to continue in the Tami<u>l</u> region in toto, where the numbers of Siddhas are variously referred to as nine or eighteen. Except Mī<u>n</u>anātha and Gōrakṣanātha, the list of Tami<u>l</u> Siddhas as enunciated by various scholars contained divergent lists. Except a couple, none of the works contain any chronological discussion of the nine/eighteen Tami<u>l</u> Siddhas. Moreover, the Tami<u>l</u> Siddhas are eulogized as atheist, anti-establishment and anti-

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128 Sastri, A Umamaheswara, *Kadapa Jilla Sasanalu: Samskriti Charitra*, (Inscriptions of Kadapa District: Culture and History) in Telugu, Sahiti Samrajyamu, Proddatur, 1995.

129 Anna L. Dallapiccola and Anila Verghese, *Op.cit*, p. 79.

brahmanical. Their writings and their songs were also quoted to support the above hypothesis.

The previous writings passingly mention about the pan-Indian Nātha-Siddha tradition in which the Tamiḻ Siddhas were superficially accommodated yet having their own regional/geographical identity. Keeping these in mind, the present study aims to have a holistic perspective of the Siddha cult in Tamiḻ region.

In this study, the philosophical tenets and ritual practices of the Nātha Siddhas will be comprehensively analysed and the Tamiḻ Siddha philosophy and their practices will be contextualized in the Pan-Indian Nātha Siddha tradition. It will also be studied as to how and why the pre-Vijayanagara Nātha Siddha cult was patronized by the Vijayanagara rulers in the other parts of Peninsular India, and how this cult penetrated into the Tamiḻ region mostly during the period of their rule and after the disintegration of the Vijayanagara Empire. The sculptural representations of the Nātha Siddhas are found extensively in the Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava temples of south India during the Vijayanagara and post Vijayanagara (Nāyaka) periods (14^{th}–17^{th} Centuries CE). Reasons for the patronization of the Nātha cult by the Vijayanagara kings were not properly looked into. While none of the textual descriptions of the Nātha Siddhas consider them as divine beings, the stone sculptors have devised ingenious methods to represent the Nātha Siddhas on vehicles without engraving their individual names and raising them to the status divine beings. On the basis of their vehicles we have to identify the individual Siddhas. Although the popularity of the Nātha Siddhas is felt in parts of south India long before 14^{th} century as indicated by the literary and inscriptional evidences, their sculptural representations were not so prolific. With the emergence of the Vijayanagara Empire, the Nātha Siddha cult becomes an institutionalized one being supported by the *Śaiva maṭhas* and patronized by the ruling and elite sections of the society. Thus the sculptural representations of the Nātha Siddhas become manifold in both Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava temples across the country.

To study these historical processes, the literary works as well as the sculptural representations of the Nātha Siddhas will be analysed across the Peninsular India to high light the penetration of this cult into the Tamiḻ region. The historical continuity of the Siddha cult in the Tamiḻ region is another important facet of the survival and

continuation of the medieval era during which the belief systems and practices continue in the Tamil̲ region and the Siddhas of the modern times were more famous than their medieval counterparts in having large number of followers and devotees, and their sayings, teachings and songs attained great popularity. This study will analyse the writings and songs of the Tamil̲ Siddhas of modern times to see the continuation of the basic tenets of medieval Siddha cults and practices and thereby establishing a link between the medieval and modern Siddha cult in Tamil̲ region.

Scope

This thesis is planned to give a comprehensive coverage of the history, traditions, rituals, etc. of the Siddha Cult from early medieval period to the modern period. Similarly, this work concentrates on spiritual, philosophical and literary aspects of the Siddha Cult. An attempt is made in this study to take historical and thematic survey on Siddha Cult in Tamil̲nādu. Major difficulty in this study is to define the exact starting period of the Siddha cult. However as per available sources, many of the *Tāntric* texts are dated by the historians to the 6th to 7th century C.E. Besides, the epigraphical evidences in relation to this cult are also available only from 11th century C.E. onwards. Similarly the art representations of this cult are also start existing in the temples not earlier than the 15th century. Therefore, this study is focused to investigate the problem from 7th century onwards. Since this study also deals with the continuity of this cult, the contemporary period is taken into consideration for research. However, the Siddha medicine and their alchemical preparations, herbal drugs and surgery, which is more popular than their *yōgic* contributions, were not discussed as the present study is to look at their philosophy and rituals of *yōgic* and *tāntric* dimension. Thus, the period of this study covers from 7th century C.E to 21st century. The present study is covering the entire geographical limits of Tamil̲nādu region including the present Union Territory of Puduchēry. However, since Siddha Cult is a Pan-Indian tradition, neighbouring states of Tamil̲nādu in south India are also surveyed. (see Maps)

Methodology

A detailed survey method is applied, including field visits and observations in the *Siddha Kśētras*. Epigraphical and archaeological sources which include

inscriptions and sculptures from various protected monuments are also located, collected and included in this study. On the basis of available epigraphical sources sculptural and literary evidences, an attempt is made to study the chronology of the siddha cult in south India. In studying the historical continuity, informal oral interview method is adopted to collect relevant information from the devotees/followers of modern/contemporary times, ranging from highly influential politicians and executives, and rich and elite sections of the society as well as the vast majority of the common people.

Sources for the Study

Source materials for this study were collected from the study area directly through field work. *Sthalapurāṇas* of the famous *Siddha Kśētras* are collected meticulously. Epigraphical sources published by the government authorities and organizations, relevant to this study are collected. The published books, articles both in Tamiḻ and English are used as secondary sources to cull relevant information required for the study.

Epigraphical Sources

There are very few inscriptions are found in South India regarding the Siddha cult. All the reliable inscriptions issued by various rulers and were later published in the epigraphical collections like *Annual Report on Epigraphy* (*ARE*), *South Indian Inscriptions* (*SII*), *Epigraphia Carnatica* (*EC*), *Epigraphia Indica* (*EI*) and other published sources, that deals with the Siddha Cult in South India are discussed.

Primary Sources in English

Arthur Avalon also known as Sir John Woodroffe is one English scholar who wrote authoritative works in English a good number of books on *Tāntric* religion and related aspects which happen to be the translations of the Sanskrit texts such as *Tantra–Tattva, Mahā Nirvana Tantra* etc. These and other works of this *Tāntric* practitioner provides us with the knowledge of the original meaning of the *tāntric* rituals, cults and complex philosophical tenets which are described by the Tamiḻ Siddhas in a veiled manner. Other primary sources in English such as '*Gōrakhnāth and the Kānphata Yogis*' by G.W. Briggs happens to be the field based study of the

Colonial Era and provides us with the first-hand information of the surviving cults of the medieval age in Northern India. '*The Gōrakṣa Siddhānta Saṅgraha* edited by Gopinath Kaviraj and *The Siddha Siddhānta Saṅgraha* of Bālabhadra are also translations of the Sanskrit works of the same name which provides us with a rich data on the Nātha-Siddha cult. *Tantras of the Reverse Current: 27 Hindu Texts Abstracted*[130] is another book which is a primary source containing summaries of the twenty seven Hindu *tantras* of the *Vāmācāra* and *Kaulācāra* sects such as *Srikula*, *Kalikula*, *Nathakula*,*Tarakula* besides other miscellaneous *tantras*. Besides the book also contain a brief methodological and conceptual discussion of the *tāntric* philosophy, such as *yōga*, *mantra*, *yantra*, *mudrās*, *nyāsa*, *kavaca*, sexuality and five *makāras*, *tāntric* gods and goddesses etc,.

Primary Sources in Tami̲l

The earliest reference to and treatment of the Siddha Cult is found only in the *Tirumandiram*[131]. It is the only source book of the *Sanmārga* Siddha School[132], and also a major work in Tami̲l on *Tantra-sāstra*. Tirumūlar on the banks of the River Kāvēri wrote his *Tirumandiram* of 3000 short verses, which have been grouped by Nambi as the Tenth Book (*Tirumuṛai*) of the Śaiva Canon[133]. The name of the book itself is significant: it is a *mantra*, mystic utterance. Tirumūlar is considered to be the first of the Siddhas. He gives out the experience both in a classical language and in the language of the masses; the ecstatic outpourings of a Siddha are also there in his work[134]. This seminal Tami̲l work is the first treatise which deals with the different aspects of the *kuṇḍalini-yōga*, under the name of *Śiva-Yōga*. Some new mystic expressions were introduced for the first time by Tirumūlar. The Siddha view of the body as a vehicle for *mokṣa sādhana* is unique in the spiritual history of Tami̲l country. Tirumūlar also introduced the concept of the twilight language as *sūnya-*

[130] Michael Magee, *Tantras of the Reverse Current: 27 Hindu Texts Abstracted* ,www.sivasakti.com, 2008

[131] *Tirumandiram: tandirams* III and IV. Though this work has been published by many, the Tiruppanandāl Mutt edition is followed in this thesis. This edition contains 3047 quatrains, plus 61 verses in the addenda gathered from various commentaries. We consider all these verses authentic.

[132] Though it deals with almost all the salient features of the Siddha cult, its tacit purpose is to establish the superiority of the *Sanmārga* Siddha school; *vide*., *Tirumandiram*: 1487

[133] The Saiva Canon consists of twelve books popularly known as *Pa̲n̲n̲iru Tirumuṛai* in Tami̲l, collected and compiled by Nambi Āṇḍār Nambi, a contemporary of Rājarāja Cō̲lā I.

[134] M. Arunachalam, *Op.cit*, pp.143-144

sambāsanai, which is a unique mode of expression in Tamiḻ. In this work, Tirumūlar says that the purity of the *jīva* can be attained through *pāsa* or attachment itself. It fulfills the meaning of the word '*Tantra'* a 'web' which joins the spiritual and the material dimensions of life[135].The *Siddhar Periya Ñānakkovai* is an anthology of 79 songs by three groups of authors[136].

Among them 32 songs by nine *Ñāna*-Siddhas constitute the source book for the *Ñāna*-Siddha School. This popular work is available in numerous editions[137]. However, the '*Siddhar Pātalkaḷ*' edited by Tha. Kovendhan (2001) is followed in this thesis[138].

With regard to the two primary sources mentioned above viz., *Tirumandiram* and the *Ñānakkovai* there are some major difficulties. They are: (i) no internal evidence gives us any historical information, least of all dates of events or bio-data of persons[139]; and (ii) the literature was not written to provide material for future historians, but for other contemporary purposes of a non-historical nature, perhaps necessary for those times. Even so, the theological and metaphysical content will be useful for this thesis since it is interested in these also. The difficulties inherent in utilizing this kind of literature straightaway as a source for history are obvious.

Secondary Sources

After the *Tirumandiram*, the traditional Tamiḻ literature is again silent about the Siddha cult. In the *Sittuvahuppu*[140] attributed to Aruṇagiri (c. 15th century), a

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[135] T.N. Ganapathy, (2008), p.18

[136] They are: 1. The nine *Ñāna*-Siddhas, 2. Nine Siddha-like poets and 3. A few late authors assuming the names of Gods (e.g. Śiva and Subramaṇiya) sages (e.g. Vālmiki and Agattiyar), *Kāya*-Siddhas (e.g. Koṅgaṇar, Saṭṭaimuṉi, Karuvurār and Rāmadevar) and poets (Vaḷḷuvar and Tirumūlar). The content and style of the songs of the third group are so stereotyped as to suggest a single, late authorship.

[137] Many earlier editions are available for e.g. Ramalinga Mudaliyar (1899) in two volumes; M.V. Venugopala Pillai (1974), and another edited work by Aru. Ramanathan is popularly referred by all.

[138] Tha. Kovendhan *Siddhar Patalgaḷ*, Poompukar Pathipagam, Chennai in 2001(6th edition). This work includes the collected songs of thirty-three Tamiḻ Siddhas with a brief introduction to them and also it ended with an appendix on glossary of important words.

[139] The little data which are gleaned from the *Tirumandiram* are highly exaggerated; e.g., the author says 'I lived for seventy million *yugas' Tirumandiram*:74); cf., *Ñānakkovai, Pāmbāṭṭi Siddhar Pādal*: 25-39.

[140] *Tiruvahuppu*: pp. 191-222. It contains 25 *vahuppus* (divisions) of which the *Sittuvahuppu* is the sixteenth. In this a Siddha from Kailas, after boasting about his 'powers' and knowledge of herbs and alchemy, declares that "he is a real Siddha who has 'realised' the *Tiruppugaḻ* (The great fame) of Lord Muruga, who is the most famous among the Siddhas"; *Ibid*: II. 95 f.

devotional hymnist on Muruga, we find a description of the main features of the *Kāya*-Siddhas. Stray references to Gōrakkan, and his miracles are found in the *Pa<u>l</u>a<u>n</u>ittalapurāṇam*[141] of Balasubramania Kavirayar (c. 17th century). In the *Koṅgumaṇdala Satakam*[142] (c.18th century C.E), references are found about the Siddhas like Bōgar and Pulippāṇi. Probably from 18th century onwards, certain *Sthalapurāṇas* such as the Karuvūrppurāṇam, give stray glimpses of the lives of a few Siddhas. However, these accounts tend to be mythical in content. The history of Tami<u>l</u> literature by M. Arunachalam[143] is perhaps the only attempt in Tami<u>l</u> to discuss the chronology of the major Siddhas of all the groups. However, the author limited his analysis to the origin and special features of the Siddha cult in Tami<u>l</u> region. Other works[144] on the Tami<u>l</u> Siddhas are popular and journalistic in nature.

Scheme of the Thesis

This study is presented in five chapters.

Chapter I: As an introductory this chapter will outline the genesis, nature and extent of the Siddha cult, sources for the study, review of literature, aims and scope and chapterisation.

Chapter II: It will give an extensive survey of literary works, in which the philosophical tenets and ritualistic practices of Siddha Nāthas are discussed in a chronological order to understand the common features between these two forms of the cult and how the medieval south Indian religion display fusion of such diverse belief systems.

Chapter III: It will discuss the inscriptional and sculptural evidences of the Nātha-Siddha cult in South India, with particular emphasis on Tami<u>l</u>nādu. The appearance of the Nātha siddhas in the sculptural art of the Vijayanagara period is discussed and described and their significance is analysed. Besides the sculptural forms of the Nātha

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[141] *Pa<u>l</u>a<u>n</u>ittalapurāṇam*: XXII, 45

[142] *Koṅgumaṇdala Satakam*:36

[143] He deals with the Tami<u>l</u> literature of the 14th, 15th and 16th centuries, setting apart a volume for each. The volume on the 16th century is divided into three parts issued separately.

[144] V. Balaramiah has issued a number of sleek volumes, none of which is critical and academic. This is true of R. Manickavasagam's *Namnāttu Siddharkal* (1978) and Sāmi Chidambaranar's *Siddharkal Kaṇda Viñānamum Tattuvamum*. e.g., A. Shanmugavelan: "*Tirumūlar Aruliya Maruttuvat-tirumandiram Ennāyiram*" in *Ulagatami<u>l</u> Mānādu Vi<u>l</u>a Malar*, Madras, 1968

Siddhas, the representation of *tāntric* elements such as the *Yōgic* postures, *Kuṇḍalini Yōga*, is also discussed to show how they are connected to the Nātha Siddha Cult.

Chapter IV: It will deal with the History and historical continuity of the Siddha Cult in Tamiḻnādu with its ramifications in the 21st century. The contemporary Siddha folklore which is still popular in parts of Tamiḻnādu is presented and discussed in this chapter to understand the continued influence of the Siddhas on the Society at large.

Chapter V: This will be the summary of the findings of this research work and the broad conclusions thereof.

Chapter II

TĀNTRIC LITERATURE: A SURVEY

In this chapter a survey of all the relavant literary works dealing with *Tāntric* ideals, methods, cults, rituals and philosophy, belonging to various sectarian faiths such as Hindu, Śaiva, Pāśupata, Śākta and Miśra is presented from the viewpoint of understanding and identifying the conceptual, ideological, ritual and spiritual undercurrents of the Nātha Siddha cult. Such a study will also help in understanding the common aspects of these sectarian faiths, the inter-changes and intra-exchanges of ideas, methods, and ritual paraphernalia and occurrence of common names of individual teachers in these diverse faiths. These commonalities will also help in understanding, identifying and interpreting the sculptural representations of the Nāths Siddhas and other *Tāntric* elements such as the *yōgic* exercises and posture, erotic representations/sexual scenes found in the Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava temples of medieval south India. Some of the *yōgic* postures and personal ritualistic attributes found in the sculptural art were also described in the *Tāntric* literary compositions of a later date which preserve the historical memories of the medieval times.

Although, the Nātha Siddha tradition has many commonalities with the Tibetan tradition, the literary works of the Buddhist *Tantra* are not discussed here in view of the fact that, by the time the Nātha Siddha cult got consolidated in South India, the Vajrayāna Buddhism disappears from the religious stage, particularly in south India. More over, as discussed in the first chapter, the Nava Nātha cult of the Western Indian tradition (*paśchimāmnāya*) or the Eighteen/Nine Siddha cult of the Tamiḻ region, developed as independent entities having the local teachers, all of whom are not found in the pan-Indian teradition. By that time each region in India began to have its own local personalities as Nātha Siddhās, despite having some common names across the subcontinent.

The Vaiṣṇava *Tāntric* literary texts known as the *Samhitās* were also not discussed in this chapter for the same reason that they have no relation with the Nātha Siddha tradition. It has been gerally accepted that the Nātha Siddhā tradition has a general predeliction to the Śaivism and Śaktism and none of the Nātha Siddha teachers are mentioned as following Vaiṣṇavism. All the Nātha Siddha centres are

having Śaivite temples and connections with the Śaiva mathas. Being part of the belief systems of the non-Brahmanical order, the Nātha Siddhas found an elevated status in Śaivism. Their personal attributes also indicate their sectarian affiliation, particularly in the wearing of Sacred Ash (*Bhaṣma/Vibhūti*) and *Rudrākṣas,* which are chararectistically associated with Śaivism.

Similarly, the most orthodox religion as Jainism also transforms in a *Tāntric* one by the assimilation of the diverse rituals and adoption of a wide gamut of deities as consorts of the Tīrthaṅkaras. But Jainism had no connection what so ever with the Nātha Siddha cult. Hence the *Tāntric* Jaina canonical works were also not discussed here.

The *Tāntric* Literature

Tantra can be termed as a class of literature which deviates from the *vēdic*-brahminical scriptural texts such as *Dharmasāsṭra, Dharmasūṭra* etc.One of the dictionary meanings of the tem is *'śruti'* (*Vēda* transmitted through the word of the mouth.of the *vēdic* literature, *Atharvaṇa Vēda* 'is a voluminous source of knowledge of the popular religion comprising of the elief in umpteen spirits, goblins, ghosts, demons, magical practices and drawings. It is in this *Vēda*, the rudiments of *tantra* are to be located[1]. Although it has been accepted that *Atharvana Vēda* contained the germs of *Tāntric* ideas, methods and practices, it is not clearly known when *Tāntric* literature originated.

The *Tantras* are the most esoteric of the canonical texts. The word itself, derived from the root meaning 'to spread', is applied to a variety of treatises, and affords no clue to the contents of these works. In India only a part of this voluminous literature called '*Tantra'* has been published so far, and the bulk is scattered and unpublished. While resembling the *śutras* in literary form, they differ from them in dealing with ritual and *yōga* rather than with ethics and philosophy and in being unintelligible without the traditional commentary. Moreover, the techniques they prescribe can be practiced only when the requisite spiritual power will be transmitted

[1] For its populist character, study of the *Yajur Vēda* has been a taboo in thr upper echolons of the society. The term '*trayī*' (the triad) came to be used to indicate the three Vēdas: *ṚgVēda, YajurVēda* and *SāmaVēda*. S.C.Banerji, *A Companion to Tantra*, Abhinav publications, Delhi, 2007, p.12.

to the disciple by a Master. Another significant feature of the *Tāntric* knowledge is its secrecy. It is stated in *Shatchakranirupana* that this knowledge can be received only from a *Guru* after being duly initiated.

There is no unanimity among the writers about the number and names of the *tantras*. "*While the number is one lakh according to some, it is millions according to others*"[2]. Arthur Avalon has given three different lists of of *Tāntric* texts (of 64 *Tantras* each) in three different regions viz., *Viṣṇu Kranta, Ratha Kranta* and *Aśva Kranta*. Further he has given a list of 192 *Tantras*, some of which have been published. The *Sammoha* or *Sammohana-tantra* knows the existence of 402 *Śaiva Tantras*, 339 *Vaiṣṇava Tantras*, 108 *Saura Tantras*, 122 *Gaṇapatya Tantras* and 39 *Bauddha Tantras*[3]. The numbers are fictitious, but they show that the author of the said *Tantra* had a vague idea of the sects and their texts[4].

Generally the *Tāntric* texts are known by such names as *Tantra, Upatantra, Āgama, Samhitā, Yāmala, Dāmara, Tattva, Kalpa, Arṇava (ka), Uddāla, Uddīśa, Upasamkhyā, Cudāmanī, Vimarśinī, Cintāmani, Purāna, Upasajṅā, Kaksaputi, Kalpadruma, Kāmadhenu, Sabhāva, Avataraṇaka, Sukta, Amrta (tarpaṇa), Darpana, Sāgara* etc[5]. Usually the *Tāntric* works of the Śaivas are called *Āgamas*, those of the Śaktas are called *Tantras*, and those of the Vaiṣṇavas are known as *Samhitās*. The *Nityasodasikārṇava* states that *Tantras* are endless in number but it records only sixty-four *Kaula Tantras*. The *Saundaryalaharī*, attributed to Śaṅkarācārya, also refers to sixty-four *Tantras*. The *Tantrāloka* of *Abhinavagupta* states that there are three groups of ten, eighteen and sixty-four Śaiva *Tantras*. The *Śaktisaṅgamantra* refers to the *Tāntric* sects and treaties of the *Vaiṣṇavas, Gaṇapatyas, Śaivas, Svāyambhūvas, Candras, Pāśupatas, Cīnas, Jainas, Kālāmukhas* and *Vaidikas.*

A classification of *Tāntric* texts on the basis of three currents such as *dakśiṇa*, *vāma* and *madhyama* is also found. Each of these texts is again subdivided into two classes as (i) inner (*hārda*) and (ii) outer (*bāhya*). This division is made in terms of

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[2] *Ibid.* p.17.

[3] P.C. Bagchi, *Op.cit.* p.100.

[4] N. N. Bhattacharya, *History of the Tantric Religion*, Manohar, New Delhi, 1992 (Rep.), p. 37.

[5] *Ibid*, p. 38. For more lists of *tantras* also see Pranab Bandyopadhyay, *The Goddess of Tantra*, Punthi Pustak, Calcutta, 1990, pp. 7-8

divya, *kaula* and *vāma*. The *āmnāya* divisions, six or nine, of the regions are often brought under two general categories viz. *Kādimata* and *Hādimata*. According to another tradition, *Tantras* are classified into *aṣtaka*, *maṅgala*, *cakra* and *śikhā*. In fact, many often the terms like *Tantra, Āgama* and *Samhitā* are used in the same sense, and each of these terms denotes some types of religious text.

According to the *Vārāhītantra*, *Āgama* deals with seven topics, viz., cosmology, destruction, worship of god, *sādhanā*, *puraścarṇa*, six forms of rites and four forms of meditation. The number of *Āgama*s of the *Pañcarātra* School is generally stated to be 108, but on comparison with different lists their number appears to be more than Two hundred. The *Vārāhītantra* gives a list of twelve special *Āgama*s which are *Muktaka*, *Prapañca*, *Śāradā*, *Nārada*, *Mahārnava*, *Kapila*, *Yōga*, *Kalpa*, *Kapiñjala*, *Amrtaśuddhi*, *Vīra* and *Siddhasamvaraṇa*.

Another class of *Tāntric* literature is called *Dāmara* which traditionally consists of six texts known as *Śiva*, *Yōga*, *Durga*, *Sārasvata*, *Brahmā* and *Gandharva*. *Yāmala* is a special class of *Tāntric* Literature, the principal ones being eight in number: *Rudra*, *Skanda, Brahma, Viṣṇu, Yama, Vāyu, Kubera* and *Indra*. Two old texts – *Piṅgalāmata* and *Jayadratha* – belong to the Yāmala group. Besides the above, there are other *Yāmalas* like *Āditya* and *Gaṇēśa*[6].

The *Tantriks* call the *Tantra* as *Śastra*, which is considered to be the word of god. Śakti is the important goddess of *Tantra*. She is responsible for creation, expansion and destruction of the universe. *Puruṣa* is of secondary importance, though the *Śakti* cannot accomplish the work of creation of the universe without *Puruṣa*. This is why in Śaktism, *Śakti* is the main deity and the *Puruṣa* a subordinate one. The male deities in Śaktism are called Bhairavas. Śiva is also a Bhairava. But he being the *Puruṣa* of Śakti his position is different from them. In reference to the deities the *Tantras* can be classified as Śakti, Śiva and Bhairava. Though the *Tantras* are many and differ from each other in respect of matters mostly of procedure there is only one

[6] *Ibid.*

common principle underlying all of them - the emphasis on *yōgic* practices. The six and half *tantras* which contain the gist of all the *Tantras* are specified in *Tantraloka*[7].

The voluminous *Tāntric* Literature is written in all the Indian languages, but most of it is in Sanskrit. It has a long tradition and has become an essential and integral part of Hinduism, which in course of time became largely *Tāntric* in theory and practice. It is not definitely known when the first work on *Tantra* was composed. But no extant *Tāntric* work can be dated earlier than the 5th century C.E. It appears that Buddhist Tantra preceded Hindu *Tantra*. According to tradition, the two Buddhist *Tantras*, *Mūlakalpatantra* and *Samājatantra* were composed in the 1st and 3rd centuries C.E. respectively[8].

The major difficulty in understanding the evolutionary patterns of *āgamas* is the lack of a historical proof of their chronological order. Some are believed to be very ancient, although there is no proof of their having existed before the 6th or 7th century C.E. More recent *Śaivāgamas* date back to the 13th or 14th century. But whatever the date, they have certainly been modified through interpolations in course of time. Their place of origin is unknown; several features point to south India, where they still form the basis of Śaiva practices and beliefs, but they were also considered authoritative in Kaśmir[9].

Because of the uncertainties of the date of their origin, few scholars have ventured to explain the origin and evolution of the *Tantras*. Some advocate an early origin, suggesting that the literature existed as an esoteric practice for many centuries before it got codified in textual form. If this were the case, then *Tantra* must have existed before the 6th century. According to Pranab Bandhopadhyay, '*Tantras* or *āgamas* as textual sources started appearing around the 7th century C.E. However, the exact origin of *Tantra* seems to be lost in a mysterious antiquity. Many schools of thought claim that the *Tantras* existed during the period as old as that of the *Vēdas*. In other words, they seem to have originated in the conception of the Creator through the

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7 Rajkumar Pruthi and Rameshwari Devi, *Religions and Faiths in India*, Mangal Deep Publications, Jaipur, 2004, pp. 20-21

8 S. C, Banerji, *A Brief History of Tantra Literature*, Naya Prokash, Calcutta, 1988, p. 164.

9 Mircea Eliade(ed) *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, Macmillan Publishing Company, New York, 1987, vol. 2, p.102.

aspect of motherhood'[10]. From 16th century onwards we begin to get written versions of popular vernacular compositions of *Tāntric* character.

Tāntric themes include the nature of the deity, cosmogony, description and worship of deities, *mantras* and *yantras*, *Tāntric yōga*, magic, and so on. Some *Tantras* are distinguished by a better Sanskrit and more complex and elaborate ideas, for instance the *Nētra, Svacchanda, Mālinīvijaya,* or *Vijñānabhairava*, all connected with Kaśmir. The best-known one in the West, the *Mahānirvāna Tantra,* is an 18th century fabrication[11].

These sacred texts formed a literary thread interwoven with the secret transmission from master to disciple. As mentioned above, some of the most difficult and profound *Tantras* were produced in the early period, most probably little earlier to the 8th century. By the time *Tantra* became the dominant system during 10th-13th centuries, a series of commentaries and authored works had appeared. Nāgārjuna's *Pañcakrama* is among the earliest. The *Tāntric Candrakirti* (9th century C.E) wrote a commentary on the *Guhyasamāja*, and Buddhaguhya (8th century C.E) discussed the *Mahāvairocana*. Sanskrit commentaries eventually were written to fossilize even the spontaneous poems of the Sahaja saints.

The Āgamas

The *āgamas* are the basic scriptures of both Southern and Kaśmir Śaivism. *Āgama* means the source from which the spiritual knowledge spreads in all directions. It has seven characteristics such as creation of the universe, dissolution of the universe, worship of gods and goddesses, spiritual practice, repetition of the mantras for attaining perfection, and performance of *satkarma*[12]. According to tradition, they are considered to be divinely inspired and emanating from Śiva[13]. The *Āgamas* are of three main classes' viz., *Śaivāgama*, *Śaktāgama* and *Vaiṣṇavāgama* or *Pañcarātra*[14].

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[10] Pranab Bandyopadhyay, *op.cit.*, p. 1

[11] Mircea Eliade, *op.cit*, vol. 6, pp.365-366.

[12] *Sat karma* means six actions namely *maraṇa* (destruction of persons), *uchātana* (driving away of enemies), *vaśikaraṇa* (bewitching of men or animals), *stambhana* (suppression of the function of a faculty by incantation), *shanti* (peace) and *vidvēsana* (separating the friends).

[13] Mircea Eliade, *op.cit*, vol. 6. P.365.

[14] Pranab Bandyopadhyay, *op.cit*, pp. 7-8.

According to one tradition, the basic *Śaiva Āgamas* are eighteen in number and according to another it is twenty eight[15]. Similar to this, each and every sect also have their own *Āgamas*. The *Āgamas* are usually in verse, and vary in length. In theory they consist of four parts *(pādas*): on knowledge or doctrine (*vidyāpāda*), on ritual *(Kriyāpāda),* on conduct *(caryāpāda),* and on *yōga (yōgapāda);* but few *Āgama*s have reached us in their complete form, if indeed they ever had one. The *vidyāpāda* in particular is often missing. *Āgama*s do not focus on philosophy or doctrine; but on how devotees should conduct their lives and practice religion. The doctrine in all *Āgama*s is not homogeneous; some are dualist, others non-dualist. Their cosmogony (notably the lists of *tattvas*) also differs, as do their views on initiation. Yet all maintain that the *agamic* path must be followed in order to gain liberation or supernatural joys, which the *Vēda*, although useful in everyday life, cannot help one to attain. Most *Āgama*s contain instructions not only on cult and ritual, but also on images and temples. The *Ajita, Kāmika,* and *Karana Āgama*s are especially rich in this respect. Thus they are the fundamental source concerning architecture and iconography and a number of practical aspects of Hinduism[16].

According to Śaṅkarācārya's work there were four Śaiva schools viz., *Śaiva, Pāśupata, Kārukasiddhāntin* and *Kāpālika*. Some comparatively later *Purāṇas*, like *Śivapurāna*, qualifies the Śaiva schools as following the *Siddhāntamārga* and mentions the *Kālāmukha* Śaivas as *Mahāvratadharins*. The *Tantrādhikarinirnaya* attributes to *Lingapurāna* a verse which refers to the sects variously as *Vāma, Pāśupata, Soma, Lāṅgala, Kāpāla Bhairava,* and *Nākula*. *Nākula* or *Lāngala* evidently refer to the *Lakulīśa-Pāśupatas*. The Pāśupata was the oldest form of Śaivism prevalent in North India. The *Mahābhārata* says that the Pāśupata doctrines were first preached by Śiva Śrīkaṇta who was probably a human teacher. Lakulīśa was probably his disciple. References to Lakulīśa, the great exponent of the Pāśupata sect, are found in an inscription dated C.E. 380-81, belonging to the reign of

[15] Tradition has it that there are twenty-eight Śaivāgamas. Ten of these are called Śaiva, that is, "revealed by the Śivas": *Kāmika, Yōgaja, Cintya, Kārana, Ajita, Dīpta, Sūksma, Sahasra, Amśumat, Suprabheda.* The eighteen others are *raudra,* "revealed by the Rudras": *Vijaya, Niśvāsa, Svāyambhuva, Anala, Vīra, Raurava, Makuta, Vimala, Candrajñāna, Bimba, Prodgīta, Lalita, Siddha, Santāna, Sarvokta, Pārameśvara, Kirana, Vātula.* See Mircea Eliade, *op.cit.*, vol. 6, p.365.

[16] Mircea Eliade, *op.cit*, vol. 6. P.365.

Chandragupta II from which it appears that he flourished in 4th century C.E in the Kathiawar region[17].

One of the important streams of the ancient Pāśupata system later culminated in what may be called Āgamānta Śaivism. The Āgamānta Śaivas appear to have contributed to the development of *Tāntric* ideas in Tamiḻ Śaivism. Rājēndra Cōḻā, during his expeditions in northern India, came in touch with some teachers of this school and brought them to his own country. Of these teachers Aghora-Śivācārya of the 12th century composed a valuable treatise known as *Kriyā-Karmadyotinī*. This was followed by Trilocana's *Siddhāntasārāvalī* and *Nigama* and Jñānadeva's *Jīrṇoddhāra dasākam*.

The Kaśmir School of Śaivism was sponsored by Vasugupta of the 9th century C.E. who is said to have derived his spiritual impulses from Śiva-Śrīkaṇtha known as the founder of the *Āgama* literature and the author of *Śivasūtra*. The Vīraśaiva School, which flourished in the Kannada speaking areas, came into existence as a revolutionary social reform movement about the middle of the 12th century under the dynamic leadership of Basava. The Philosophy of this school is directly inspired by the twenty-eight *Śaiva Āgamas*. In the Kannada language, the *Vacanās* of Basava, and works like *Basavapurāṇa*, *ChannaBasavapurāṇa*, etc., contain much information about the philosophical tenets of this school. In Vīraśaiva system greater importance is laid on the doctrine of *Śakti* and that is why it is also called *Śaktiviśistāvaitavāta*.

Tāntric texts in their present form mostly belong to the medieval and late-medieval period. However, manuscripts of several *Tāntric* texts have been found in Gupta characters, the most important being that of *Kubjikāmata*, now in the Asiatic Society of Bengal. Copied between sixth and seventh centuries C E, according to H.P.Sastri[18] this work describes about the five *Śakti Pīthas*[19]. The Śaiva *Āgama*s of the South are mentioned in a 7th century Kailāsanātha temple inscription of Rājasimhavarman. Epigraphic references to a number of *Tāntric* texts which were

[17] *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XXI, pp.1-9

[18] R.S.Sharma "Economic and social basis of Tantrism" *Early Medieval Indian Society: A Study of Feudalisation*, Orient Longman, Delhi, 2001, pp. 235-265.

[19] H. P. Sastri, 'A Catalogue of Palm-Leaf and Paper Manuscripts' quoted by R.S.Sharma, *Early Medieval Indian Society: A Study of Feudalisation*, Orient Longman, Delhi, 2001, p.247.

introduced in Cambodia as early as the beginning of the 9th century C.E exist. Besides these there are also many individual literary works on *Tantras* by *Tāntric* teachers also occupying an important place[20]. Works on *Tāntric yōga*, on *kuṇḍalini*, on the science of *mantra (mantraśāstra)* should also be mentioned; these constitute an important group of well-known texts as *Prapañcasāra, Śāradātilaka,* and *Mantramahodadhi.* There are also literary or ritual compositions (*nibandha*), manuals of ritual (*paddhati*), and innumerable compilations and digests.

The *Śākta Tantras*

The range of the *Śākta Tantras* is wide and seeks to include, besides the works belonging to its own category, works of other *Tāntric* schools, especially the Śaiva. According to the traditional *Śākta-Tāntric* viewpoint, *Śakti* is inherent in Śiva as the power of burning is in fire. The supposed five faces of Śiva – *Īśāna*, *Tatpurusa*, *Sadyojāta*, *Vāmadēva* and *Aghora*-symbolise the functioning of *Śakti* in the spheres of consciousness (*cit*), bliss (*ānanda*), will (*icchā*), knowledge (*jñana*), and action (*kriyā*) respectively. The five mouths had produced initially ten *Āgama*s[21], which were the precursors of eighteen *Raudra Āgama*s[22]. All these together constitute the twenty eight *Śaiva Āgama*s. According to another tradition the southern face of Śiva represents the principle of non-duality and is called *Yoginī vaktra*. The remaining four faces represent four conditions-denotative, denoted, extinguishing and extinguished. The products from each of these combine to form the sixty-four *Bhairava Āgama*s, classed under the category of eight *Aṣtakas*[23].

Many *Tāntric* works have been attributed to Śaṅkarācārya, of which the *Prapañcasāra* is regarded as an authoritative work in the Śakta tradition. It is written in thirty-six *patalas* and its commentary, known as *Vivarana*, is attributed to Padmapāda. *Saundaryalaharī*, a hymn to the Divine Mother, is also attributed to Śaṅkara. It has numerous commentaries of which those of Gaṅgahari and Lakśmīdhara contain much information on different aspects of the cult of Śakti.

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[20] N. N. Bhattacharya, *op.cit*, p. 40.

[21] *Kāmika, Yōgaja, Cintya, Mukuta, Amsumān, Dīpta, Ajita, Suksma, Sahasra* and *Suprabeda*.

[22] *Vijaya, Niśvāsa, Madgīta, Pārameśvara, Mukhavimba, Siddha, Santāna, Nārasimha, Candrāmśu, Vīrabhadra, Āgneya, Svayambhū, Visara, Raurava, Vimala, Kirana, Lalita* and *Saumeya*.

[23] For a detailed list on Sixty-four *Bhairava Āgamas*, see N. N. Bhattacharya, *op.cit*, p. 67

Śaṅkara is also said to have commented on a few *Tāntric* works like the *Śrīvidyāratnasūtra* attributed to Gaudapāda. Punyānandanātha's *Kāmakalāvilāsa* is a well known *Tāntric* treatise. Its commentary known as Cidavallī was written by Natanānandanātha. One of the most important *Tāntric* digests is the *Śāradātilaka* of Lakśmaṇa Deśika which was composed in about 11th century C.E. This celebrated work has several commentaries, the most learned and lucid of which is the *Padārthādarśa* of Rāghava Bhatta composed about the end of the 15th century[24].

The *Pārānandasūtra*

It is an earlier *Tāntric* work was composed in c. 900 C.E which deals with *Kuladharma* described as the cream of the Vēdas. It holds that the Supreme Being is one and refers to seven sectarian deities – Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva, Gaṇēśa, Sūrya, Śakti and Bhairavā. According to this text, of the three ways of *sādhana* the *Dakśiṇamārga* is sanctioned by the *Vēdas*, the *Smrtis*, and *Purāṇas*; the *Vāmamārga* by the *Āgamas*, and the *Uttaramārga* only by the words of the *guru* or preceptor. *Vāmamārga* is of two kinds; that which insists on the *Pañca-tattva* is the better one. The *Pārānandasūtra* prescribes that the disciple has to undergo *dīkṣā* or initiation from a qualified *guru*, who should preferably be *jīvan-mukta*, i.e., one who is liberated and is not tainted in any way. The preceptor should collect the materials of the five *makāras* and hand over to the disciple a bowl for drinking wine, *mudrā* (fried cereal), and a woman (generally a courtesan). It is stated that a young woman, even a courtesan, is *Brahman*. She is Śakti incarnate. Always and in all conditions she is the purest entity. Details of *Kauladharma* are given in this text. It describes the procedure of *Tāntric* festivals, the efficacies of *mantras* and *mudrās*, names of teachers ending in *Ānanda*, and details of sexual techniques which may appear repulsive and vulgar to many today[25].

The *Sabaratantra*[26]

This is one of the early *Tāntric* texts of the Kāpālika sect which contain significant information about the evolution of the Nātha Sect. This *Tantra* gives a list

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[24] N. N. Bhattacharya, *op.cit*, pp. 69-70

[25] *ibid*, pp. 71-72

[26] *The Gōraksha Siddhanta Sangraha* (ed), Gopinath Kaviraj, Baroda, 1925 quoted by Lorenzen, D.N. *The Kāpālikas and Kālamukhas: Two lost Saivite Sects*, Munshiram Manoharlal*,* Delhi,1972, p.37-38.

of tweleve original Kāpālika teachers to whom the Kāpālika doctrine was revealed. They are: Ādinātha, Anādi, Kāla, Atikālaka, Karāḷa, Vikarāḷa, Mahākāla, Kālabhairavanātha, Baṭuka, Bhūtanātha, Vīranātha, and Śrīkaṇṭha. These twelve had twelve disciples: Nāgārjuna, Jaḍabharata, Hariśchandra, Satyanātha, Bhimanātha, Gōrakṣa, Carpaṭa, Avadya, Vairāgya, Kanthādhārin, Jalandhara, and Malayārjuna. These pupils were the original 'promoters of the (Kāpālika) path (*mārgapravartakas*). Several of these names recur in traditional lists of nine Nāthas and eighty-four Siddhas of the Tibetan as well as Kānphaṭā Yogis, most notably the name of Gōrakhnāth (Gōrakṣa) himself. On the basis of this statement and the common features in Kāpālika and Kānphaṭā worship, we can conclude that the Nātha sampradaya derived much from the older Kāpālika order, particularly in the ritual paraphernalia, philosophy and practices.

The *Kulārṇavatantra*

The *Kulārṇava* is one of the most important *Tāntric* works. It was composed probably before 11th Century C.E. According to the *Kulārṇava*, the *Kuladharma* is the essence of the *Vēdas*. The *Kulārṇava* says that every woman is born in the *kula* of the Great Mother and hence she must be regarded as an object of veneration. Two chapters of the *Kulārṇava* are devoted to the qualifications and greatness of the *guru*. It emphasizes that the order of the succession of *gurus*, the *Āgama*s, *Āmnāya*, *mantra* and *kriya* when learnt from the lips of the right *guru* become fruitful and not otherwise. The *Kulārṇava* recommends the drinking of wine, sexual intercourse with woman, eating of flesh, etc., to the followers of Kaula doctrine, but at the same time it also endeavours to give an esoteric meaning to the five *makāras*. It refers to eighteen *Śakta Pīthas* viz., Uddiyāna, Devīkotta, Hiṅgulā, Kotimudrā, Jālandhara, Vārāṇasī, Antarvedī, Prayāga, Mithilā, Magadha, Mēkala, Aṅga, Vaṅga, Kaliṅga, Simhala, Strīrrājya, Rādha and Gauda[27].

The *Śaradātilaka*

The *Śaradātilaka* of Lakśmaṇa Deśikēndra is another well known work on *Tantra* which was composed in c. 11th century C.E. According to this text, Śiva is

[27] N. N. Bhattacharya, *op.cit*, pp. 72-73.

both *nirguṇa* and *saguṇa*, the two aspects being conceived in terms of difference from and identitical with *Prakṛti*. When Śiva is identical with *Śakti* or *Prakṛti*, he is *saguṇa*. From *Śakti* or *Prakṛti* evolves *nāda* (*apara*) and from this *nāda* arises *bindu*. The latter is subdivided into *bindu* (*apara*), *bīja* and *nāda* (*para*). The first is again identified with Śiva, the second with Śakti and third with both in identical relation. *Śakti*, also called *Parā-śakti* and *Parā-dēvatā*, is conceived as *Śabda-brahma* that flashes like lightning in the *ādhāra-cakra* and assumes the form of *Kuṇḍalini* in the human body. From Śiva in the form of the said *bindu* of the apara category come out in succession Sadāśiva, Īśa, Rudra, Viṣṇu and Brahmā. The Sāṅkhya categories also are traced to the *bindu*. The all-pervading and at the same time the most subtle Śakti remains coiled like a serpent in her *Kulakuṇḍalini* form and becomes manifest in the form of the fifty letters of the Sanskrit alphabet.

The *Mahānirvānatantra*

The *Mahānirvānatantra* is a late but important work containing much of the earlier tradition representing the best and the sophisticated *Tāntric* tradition[28]. It has been regarded by scholars as a 'refined' work. The present form of the text is not much earlier than the 18th century and it is burdened with *Vēdantic* elements, but there are reasons to believe that the text had an older form. Because, often the term '*nirvāna*' employed by the Buddhists. At the same, *Vēdantic* ideas were interpolated, pure *Tāntric* ritualistic aspects were modified, and it was fashioned in such a way that it would appeal to the Hindu taste in general. Besides, it puts forward the *Vēdantic* conception that the Supreme Being is one, without a second. He is *Brahman* who is beyond the three *guṇas* viz., *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda*.

The *Mahānirvāna* upholds Śakta monotheism with Durgā as the highest *prakriti* who is also known by the names of *Mahāvidyā* and equated with *Lakśmī, Śarasvatī* and *Śakti*. The *Mahānirvāna* frankly states that the *Vēdas*, *Purāṇas* and *Śastras* are hardly of any use in the *Kaliyuga* that perfection cannot be attained without following the *Kula* practices and that the rituals of Five '*M*'s are necessary. In

[28] N. N. Bhattacharya.*op.cit*, p. 69. The work was first published by the Ādi Brahmo Samaj. The preface stated that three manuscripts were consulted to prepare the edition-one belonging to the library of the Samāj, the second supplied by Sri Durgadas Chaudhuri, and the third taken from the library of Raja Rammohan Roy.

the *cakra* rituals the Five '*M*'s of *tattvas* like wine, etc., should be collected and placed in front of the goddess and then properly performed. The text also gives a detailed description of the *Bhairavi-Cakra*, *Tattva–Cakra*, and *Sri-Cakra*. In all these three, Sexual intercourse is prescribed under the supervision and permission of the *Guru*. Besides the above, other common features of *Tāntric* texts have also been elaborately discussed[29].

Other *Śakta Tantras*

The *Paraśurāmakalpasūtra* is an earlier work composed in c.1300 C.E. Its commentary is known as *Saubhāgayodaya* written by Rāmeśvara. The special features of this work are the *āmnāya* classifications, insistence on the secrecy of the knowledge conveyed by the preceptor and worship of the five *makāras*, thirty-six *tattvas* including those of the *Sānkhya* system, *āsana*, *maṇdapa*, *kuṇda*, *maṇdala*, *dīkṣā*, etc. It states that after initiation the preceptor is to give a name to the disciple which should have the suffix 'Ānandanātha'.

The *Jñānārṇava-tantra*, considered to be one of the foremost textual composions of the worship of *Srividya* emphasizes the worship of '*Tripuri*' who is identified as the embodiment of '*Jñāna*'(knowledge/wisdom); Conisting of 26 Chapters (*Patalas*) the text describes the functioning of the *cakras* or nerve plexes within the body and the wonderful power of the various *mudrās*, *yantras* and *Bīja mantras* in the worship of *Sridēvi/Tripuri/Gāyatri* and other forms of the supreme mother such as *Bhairavi, Aṉṉapurṇa etc.* It also describes different rituals such as *Sricakra maṇḍala Pūjā, Aṣta siddha pūjā, Ratna Pūjā, Kumari Pūjā, etc.* It analyses the significance of *Nāda* and *Bindu* and the principle of non-duality also. It also describes the significance of different *yantras* in attaining the desired wishes of the devotee. It states that at the time of initiation the guru has to instruct the disciple regarding the six *cakras*, together with the number of petals in each, the colour of each, and the letter with the alphabet (*bījākśara*) assigned to each.

The *Kaulāvalinirṇaya* was composed by Jñānāndagiri on twenty-one *ullāsas*. It gives a list of *Tāntric* works including the *Yāmalas* and names eight *Tāntric gurus*.

[29] N. N. Bhattacharya, *op.cit*, pp. 74-76

It deals mainly with the *Kulamārga* with emphasis on the rituals of Five '*M*'s. Women are highly praised in this work as manifestation of the Great Mother. It is interesting to note that the *Kaulāvalinirṇaya* offers various substitutes for the Five '*M*'s. It lays supreme emphasis on sexual union. It also describes in detail the *mantrasiddhi* or *śavasādhanā* in which the aspirant has to perform rituals with a corpse.

The *Akulavīra Tantra* is said to have been revealed by Mīṉanātha (Matśyēndranātha) himself.It is a small text containing some statements on *Tāntric Yōga*. One manuscript dates back to 13th Century C.E and its origin is Kāmarūpa (Assam). Another manuscript of the same belongs to 9th Century C.E[30].

Jayadrathayamala is an important work containg 24,000 stanzas devided into four parts. The manuscript of the fourth part is datable to 12th Century C.E, while those of other parts seem to be later interplations. Chapter 35 and 36 entitled *sambhandāvatāra* and *sūtra-nirṇaya* have some importance in the history of *tantra*. The latter one names the *tantras* of different traditions. Chapter 41 deals with *yāmala*, *maṅgaḷa*, *Aṣtaka* and the genealogies of the teachers (*guru parampara*) who taught the *tantra*[31].

The *Rudrayāmala* is an extensive work in sixty-six chapters and has over 6,000 verses. One of the important features of this work is that it contains a panegyric of *Atharva Vēda* saying that all gods, all beings, all sages along with *Kāmavidyā* and *Mahāvidyā* dwell in it. It deals with the mysterious *Kuṇḍalini*, *Yōgic* practices, and the six *cakras* in the body. It also prescribes sexual union and the use of wine; it states that a *vīra* should drink wine and use a beautiful woman who is capable of arousing sexual passion. It also mentions about some important *Śakta Pīthas*.

The *Śaktisaṅgamantra* holds that *Kulācāra* in general is nothing but the cult of Śakti in any of her forms and aspects, but its peculiarity is a special form of worship done with wine, flesh, fish, cereals and sexual union. The knowledge conveyed by the guru and the worship with five *makāras* should be kept in secrecy. It is interesting to

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30 S. C. Banerji, *A Companion to Tantra*, *op.cit.,* p.121

31 Bagchi, P.C., *Op,cit.* pp.109-114.

note that the *Śaktisaṅgamantra* states that the Devī manifests herself for the destruction of the Buddhist and other heretical sects, for the removal of the confusing admixture of different cults, and for the establishment of true religion. The *Śaktisaṅgamantra* is divided into four parts viz., *Kālī, Tārā, Sundarī* and *Chinnamastā*. It was composed sometime between 16th - 17th centuries C.E.

The *Yōni Tantra*[32] is another work from the Kāmarūpa region (Assam) which highlights the worship of *yōni* (female genital organ) and the consumption of *Yōni tattva*. Containing 8 chapters (*patalas*) this work of an anonymous author describes the methods of worship of the *yōni*, the significance of the *Yōni tattva* and the benefits of its consumption and use in the *kaulachara* ritual, description of the *Dasa Mahavidyas,* characteristic features of an *Avadhuta,* reverence to women and the methods and time of their worship, use of *pañcatattvas* by the *virabhava,* techniques of *virasadhana* etc.

The *Kaulajñānanirṇaya* is an important *Tāntric* work belonging to the *Nātha* tradition, supposed to have been composed *by Matśyēndranātha* who was the founder of one of the *Kaula* schools called *Yōgini-kaula*. The doctrines of this school, as may be gathered from this text, have something in common with the Buddhist *Tantras* of the *Sahajiyā* class. H.P. Sastri assigned the manuscript of this work to the 9th century C.E, but P.C. Bagchi placed it in the middle of the 11th century C.E. It is divided into 24 sections and deals mainly with meaning of *kula*, practices prescribed for a *kaula*, the principle *Akulavira*, relation between *śiva-śakti, Bindu, nāda, mōkṣa*, mode of worship, means of acquisition of powers by which one can kill others and enjoy long life. *Kula* is defined as the condition in which the mind and the sight of the devotee merge and the senses lose their independence, the devotee's own power becomes one with *jīva*, and his sight merges into the visible objects. *Kula* is identical with Śakti, who merges into Śiva, Śiva into action (*kriya*), Kriya into *Jñāna I* (knowledge), through *icchā* (desire) which merges finally into supreme Śiva. *Mukti* (liberation) can be achieved with the perfect knowledge of Śiva. A liberated man can liberate others[33].

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[32] Magee, Micheal, (Trans.), *The Yoni Tantra*, Worldwide Tantra Project, Vol. II, U.K., 1995.

[33] Bagchi, P.C., *Studies in the Tantras* and *Caryagiti-Kosa of Buddhist Siddhas,* University of Calcutta, Calcutta, 1939.

The *Gōrakṣa-siddhānta-samgraha* is another important *Tāntric* text which says that the *Kaula Tantras* were introduced on earth by the nine *Nātha* teachers. It is a collection of short tracts of the Nātha sect such as Matśyēndranāth, Gōrakṣnāth, Jālandharanātha and Bhṛtrhari etc. This work discusses such important topics as non-discrimination of people on the basis of caste; nature and importance of *yōga*; description of *Avadhūta*; salvation resulting from the attainment of Nāthahood; description of the *Kāpālika tantra*; definition of *paramahamsa*; denumciation of the enjoyment of prostitutes; characteristics of goodmen; *ācāra* or *Tāntric* mode of worship etc[34].

The *Gōrakṣa Sataka*[35] is an important as well as a basic text of the *Nāthasiddha* School[36]. Both the *Nātha* cult and *Vajrayāna* had a fundamental unity in their esoteric aspects. Jālandhari, better known as Hādi-pā wrote some treatises in Sanskrit on *Tāntric* cults, such as *Vajrayōginīsādhanā*, *Śuddhivajrapradīpa* (a gloss on *Hevajrasādhanā*) *Śricakra-sambhara-garbha-tattva-vidhi* and *Humkāra-cittavindu-bhāvana-krama*. These are mentioned in Tañjāvūr catalogue. From the same source we learn that Ācārya Chauraṅgī composed a *Yōgic* work under the title *Vāyutattvopadeśa*[37].

The *Gōrakṣa-vachana-samgraha* is also believed to be a medieval Sanskrit word consisting of the summaries of the discourses of Gōrakṣanātha[38] encompassing such complex philosophical ideas such as non-duality of God, Śiva and Śakti, evolution of the cosmic body of Śiva, non-duality of *jīvātma* and *paramātma*, the secrets of premival sound, breath, *samādhi*, *sadaṅga yōga*; characteristics of an *avadhūta yōgi*[39]. The editor in his lengthy explanation discuss some portions of

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[34] Kaviraj, Gopinath (ed.), *The Gōraksha Siddhanta Sangraha* and *The Siddha Siddhanta Sangraha* of Balabhadra, University of Burdwan, Calcutta, 1966.

[35] An English translation of the original text of *Gōrakṣa Sataka* is found in the scholarly work of G.W. Briggs, *op.cit,* pp. 284-304.

[36] These works belong to a slightly earlier period than the *Tirumandiram*. For more details see R. Venkatraman, *A History of the Tamil Siddha Cult*, Ennes Publications, Madurai, 1990

[37] N. N. Bhattacharya, *op.cit*, pp. 78-79

[38] A.K. Banerjea edited this work with a detailed description and explanation of the discourses under the title *Philosophy of Gōrakṣnāth*, Motilal Banarsidas, Delhi, 1999. As an appendix he gives the original Sanskrit text consisting of 175 couplets.

[39] "*Prasaram bhāsate Śaktih samkocam bhāsate Śivah/ Tayoryōgasya kartā yah sa bhavet Siddha-yogirāt./ Viśwātitam yathā viśwam ekam eva virājate / Samyogena sadā yas tu Siddha-Yogi bhavet tu sah. / Paripurna-prasannātmā sarvāsarva-padoditah / Viśuddho nirbharānandah sa bhavet Siddha-yogirat.*" ("a perfectly enlightened *siddha-yogi* lives in the embodied state amidst all kinds of mundane

another Sanskrit work '*Siddha Siddhāntha Paddathi*', also ascribed to Gōrakṣanātha[40].

Haṭhayōgapradīpika is a *Tāntric-Haṭha-Yōga* treatise written by Cintāmaṇi, who was a hermit, took the name of Svātmarāma and attained the title, Yogindra. He knows a long list of Yogis who preceded him, more than twenty-four in all. The book therefore is fairly late which probably belongs to 15th century and contains 382 verses arranged in four chapters. The verses in the *Gōrakṣa-śataka* are found, verbatium or in substance, scattered in the *Haṭhayōgapradīpika*. Portions of it are found in the commentary, as well as in the text of *Gōrakṣa Paddhati*. Therefore, it may be considered as an elaboration of earlier works of the school[41]. The *Haṭhayōgapradīpikā* (I, 5-9) contains a list of 'great Siddhas'. Some names tend to appear with greater frequency in various sources. In North India, aside from Matśyēndranāth and Gōrakhnāth, the most important Siddhas are Nāgārjuna and the other alchemists. As in the South, there are a few names which tend to reappear again and again: Agastya, Tirumūlar, Śivavākkiyar. The number eighty four (Siddhas) current in the North is as 'unhistorical' as the number eighteen in the South; both are mystical numbers well attested in Indian tradition[42].

Nava Nātha Bhakthi Sāra

Nava Nātha Bhakthi Sāra is one of the popular Marathi literary works on *Nava Nātha* cult. It was written by a Maharastra poet Mālu in Marathi language in 1319 C.E. It is believed that he is one among the persons who popularized the Nava Nātha cult in south India around 14th century C.E. The *Nava Nātha Bhakthi Sāra* is considered to be the most authentic work which is still being followed in the

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circumstances with undimmed and undisturbed *Śiva-consciousness*, and enjoys in this world of bondages, sorrows and struggles perfect freedom…. To him this world is, empirically speaking, transformed into a *mukti*"). *Ibid*. pp. 248-249.

40 G.W. Briggs, *op.cit*, p.255

41 G.W. Briggs, *op.cit*, p.253; see also Mircea Eliade, 2009 Edn, *op.cit*., pp.229-230 The verses were translated into English in 1915 by Pañcam Sinha and printed at Allahabad in the series known as '*The Sacred Books of the Hindus*'.

42 Kamil.V.Zelebil, *The Poets of Powers*, p.28

Maharastra and Karnātaka regions. Translations of this work are also available in many other Indian languages[43].

Nava Nātha Charitra

Nava Nātha Charitra is one of the important and popular works in Telugu. *Nava Nātha Charitra* was written by a Telugu poet Gaurana in *dvipatha* style. He wrote this work at the command of the chief pontiff of the *Siddha Bikśa Vritti Matha* of Śrisailam. Gaurana himself mentions that his work is a copy of the work by one of his predecessors, poet Śrigiri. Though the original work of Śrigiri is not available, it is already famous by the time of another Telugu poet Jakkanna who lived between 1380 and 1440 C.E. Jakkanna mentions Śrigiri in his work *Vikramarka Caritramu*. Jakkana was a younger contemporary of Śri Nātha who belongs to the 14th century C.E. Similarly, the inscription which mention about the pontiff of *Bikśhavritti Matha* is dated about 1445 C.E. Therefore it is right to say that Gaurana belongs to the 15th century C.E. The *Nava Nātha Charitra* in Telugu and Marathi versions speaks about Raja Narendra, a king of the Malwa Dēśa. The Telugu people identified him with the Eastern Chalukyan king Rajaraja Narendra. Apart from these, the Marathi version mentions about various sacred places, of which the *Kadali Dēśa* is, identified with the sacred place of the same name in the Nallamalai hills like Śrisailam and the contiguous regions of Karnātaka and Maharastra. *Nava Nātha Charitra* speaks about the regions of the Kriśṇa-Tuṅgabadra valley in its many stories. It was the Siddha Nagārjuna an alchemist of Śrisailam spread the message of *Nava Nāthas* in South India[44].

***Śaiva-Siddhānta* of South India**

South Indian Śaivism harks back to pre-Christian times, too contains *Tāntric* elements. The edifice of Śaiva Siddhānta rests on the pillars of two main traditions, one *Vēdic* and other *Āgamic*. The works of this school are written in Sanskrit as well as in Tamiḻ. In this school, twenty eight *Āgamas* are recognized. The most authoritative of which according to this school, is *Kāmikāgama*. Śaiva devotional

43 N. Chandramouli, '*Siddha Cult In South India: Representations In Art And Their Ramifications'*, (Paper presented in the International Seminar on 'World Religions after September 11th: An Asian Perspective' Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, 17-19, January, 2009)

44 *Ibid*. see also Obi Reddy, K. *Navanātha Charitra: A Literary Critique* (in Telugu), Anantapur,1995.

literature spread over a few centuries from the 5th to the 9th century C.E. These devotional songs of the Śaiva saints who were popularly known as *Nāyaṇmars*, laid the basis of Tamiḻ Śaivism as an organized religio-philosophical entity. Nambi Āṇḍār Nambi (1000 C.E.) is well-known as a compiler of Śaiva hymns, collectively called *Tirumuṛai*. Sekkirar's *Periapurānam* (11th century) which containing the biographies of sixty three Śaiva saints, is of considerable value in the history of southern Śaivism[45].

Meikaṇdar's *Śiva-jñāna-bōdham* (13th century) is the first attempt at a systematic statement of the tenets of Tamiḻ Śaivism and also an authoritative exposition of the doctrines of this school. This is a short treatise of a dozen of aphorisms (*sūtras*) which seem to have been translated from a Sanskrit original. The author has added *vārttikas* of his own which explain and illustrate the argument of each of the *sūtras*. Śivajñāna-muṉivar, the commentator on the *sūtras* says that they form part of the *Raurava-āgama*. The next important one is Meikaṇdar's disciple, Arulnandi Śivācārya who wrote the renowned work, *Śiva-jñāna-siddhiyār*. Then Mānavāśagaṅgadandār's *Uṇmai-vilakkam* is a catechism which claims to reveal the essence of all *Āgama*s. Umāpati-Śivācārya (14th century) was the author of eight works of which the *Śivappirākāsam*, *Saṅkarpa-nirākaranam*, and *Uṇmai-nēṛi-vilakkam* are the most important. Well-known among the works of Umāpati are the *Śivaprakāsam* and *Tiru-aruḷpayan*[46]. The two aforesaid traditions were sought to be syncretised by Nīlakaṇtha (14th century) who interpreted the *Brahma-sūtra* in the light of the Śaiva system. Generally agreeing with Rāmānuja, he raises his voice of protest against the absolute identity or absolute distinction between God on the one hand, and the souls and the world on the other. Śiva, with his consort, Ambāl, is the Supreme, having as His body both the conscious and unconscious entities. Of great value is Appaya Dīkṣita's commentary, called *Śivārka-maṇidīpikā*[47].

The three crucial concepts, forming the corner-stone of this system, are *Pati*, *Paśu* and *Pāśa*. Śiva is *Pati* (Lord). To him belong the *Paśus* (literally cattle), the

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45 S.C. Banerji, *op.cit*, p. 480

46 Also See Thamizhannal, *Puthiya Nōkkil Tamiḻ Ilakkiya Varalāru*, (Tamiḻ), Meenatchi Puthaka Nilayam, Madurai, 2011 (11th Rep.), p. 307

47 S.C. Banerji, *op.cit*, p. 481; see also N. N. Bhattacharya, *op.cit*, pp. 52-53

endless host of souls. *Pāśas* (fetters) are distinguished as *avidyā*, *karma* and *māyā*. Avidyā is *ānavamala* or the impurity caused by the false notion of the soul that it is finite. *Karma* is the cause of the connection of the conscious soul with the unconscious body. *Māyā* is the basis of all impurities. This school does not recognize the illusory conception of the world. It has a serious moral purpose to serve. The rhythm of the world, regulated by the law of *Karma*, continues to exist for the single purpose of attracting man to the higher life; God is ever intent on attaining the *summun bonum*, must be free from the above threefold sin or impurity.

The *Tiruvāsagam* poetically describes the progress of the soul from bondage to liberation which does not mean becoming one with God, but enjoying His presence. After snapping the *pāśas*, one becomes like Śiva though the functions of creation etc. are prerogative of the Lord. The *jīvanmukta* feels identified with the Supreme Being. In this system, as we learn from the *Siddhiyar* xii. 2, quoted in the *Siddhānta-dīpikā*, no love of God is possible without love of mankind. The time-honoured caste-restrictions have been done away with. Says Tirumūlar (*Tirumantiram*) that there is only one caste as there is one God. Basava (middle of 12th century) revolted against Brāhmanical supremacy and the conventional concept of re-birth has also been rejected[48].

Kāmikāgama

The *Kāmikāgama*, belonging to the *Siddhānta* School of South Indian Śaivism, is a metrical work in two parts, *Pūrvabhāga* and *Uttarabhāga*. The *Pūrvabhāga* itself consists of seventy five *Paṭala* (chapters). Apart from ritual matters, the *Kāmikāgama* also concerned with temple-architecture, consecration, priests, devotees and a little of philosophical ideas. The *Śaiva Āgamas* are valuable sources of information about Śaivite temples – from the selection of the site up to the installation of images. Thus, *Kāmikāgama* is important in the *Tāntric* as well as cultural history of India[49].

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[48] S.C. Banerji, *op.cit*, pp. 481-82

[49] *Ibid*. pp. 482-83

Mataṅga-Pārameśvarāgama

This work is an *Upāgama* of the *Pāramēśvara*, the twenty sixth of the twenty eight *Āgamas* of the Śaiva Siddhānta school. It is divided into four sections (*pāda*), viz., *Vidyā*, *Kriyā*, *Yōga*, *Caryā*. The *Vidyāpāda* has a commentary by Rāmakantha, son of Nārāyaṇakantha. This section is stated to contain 1,500 verses. In the printed edition, we find 1,537 stanzas. The *Kriyāpāda* is stated to consist of 1000 verses. The editor informs us that, in the extant manuscripts, there are 983 stanzas. The *Yōgapāda*, stated to contain 500 verses, now contains 428 stanzas. The *Caryāpāda*, stated to contain 500 verses, exists in 470 stanzas[50].

Śata-Ratṇa-Samgraha

It was complied with a commentary by Umāpati Śivācārya, a well-known teacher of Śaiva philosophy of his time. He flourished in South India in the 13th-14th century C.E. He was the founder of the famous *Chidambara Matha* and the images of Chidambarēśvara and Kāmēśvari, the presiding deities of the temple, were installed by him. He authored several works and also wrote eight treatises on *Śaiva Siddhāntā Śāstra* in Tamil̲. It precisely deals with Śaiva philosophy including its underlying ethics and religion. It also attempts to harmonize the different ideals of self-realisation and to restrain their extravagance. Intellectual apprehension of the *tattvas*, strenuous self-sacrifice, unflinching observances, rituals and *Yōgic* practices are all regarded as effective methods of approach to Śiva[51].

Tiruman[t]diram

The earliest reference to and treatment of the Siddha cult is found only in the *Tirumandiram*[52]. It is the only source book of the *Sanmārgasiddha* School[53], and also a major work in Tamil̲ on *Tantra-sāstra*. Tirumūlar's *Tirumandiram* consisting of 3000 short verses have been classified by Nambi as the Tenth Book of the Śaiva

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50 *Ibid*. p. 483

51 S.C. Banerji, *op.cit*, p. 486

52 Chapter *(tandirams)* III and IV of *Tirumandiram*

53 Though it deals with almost all the salient features of the Siddha cult, its tacit purpose is to establish the superiority of the *Sanmargasiddha* School; *see Tirumandiram*, verse No. 1487

Canon[54]. The name of the book itself is significant: it is a mantra, mystic utterance. Tirumūlar is considered to be the first of the Siddha. He gives out the experience both in a classical language and in the language of the masses; the ecstatic outpourings of a Siddha are also there in his work[55]. This seminal Tamiḻ work is the first treatise which deals with the different aspects of the *Kuṇḍalini-yōga*, under the name of *Śiva-Yōga*. Some new mystic expressions which were not found in earlier literatures, introduced for the first time by Tirumūlar.

The Siddha view of the body as a *mokśa sādhana* acquired a unique importance which it had never before attained in the spiritual history of Tamiḻ Nadu. Tirumūlar also introduced the concept of the twilight language as *sūnya-sambāśanai*, which is a unique mode of expression in Tamiḻ. In this work, Tirumūlar says that the purity of the *jīva* can be attained through *pāsa* or attachment itself. He says that one can rid of *pāsa* by *pāsa* itself. He also expresses the same idea by calling it the wisdom's way. His *Pariyaṅga-Yōga* is an expression of this basic concept of *Tantra*. Above all, this work deals with how one may live a divine life in the midst of the worldly one. It fulfills the meaning of the word '*Tantra'* a 'web' which joins the spiritual and the material dimensions of life[56].

In one of the autobiographical verses found in the prologue of the text, Tirumūlar states that having daily contemplated Śiva wearing a crescent moon, he began to compose the *āgama*. He also maintains that he was renowned for his capabilities for enunciating a *Śivāgama*. This is supported by Verse 101 which states that Mūlan delivered a beautiful *āgamic* discourse in three thousand verses, grouped into nine *tantras*. However, the text distances itself from the establishment of temple and temple ritual, the focal points of the *āgamas* of Southern Śaivism[57].

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[54] The Śaiva Canon consists of twelve books popularly known as Panniru Tirumuṛai in Tamiḻ, co llected and compiled by Nambi Āṇḍār Nambi, a contemporary of Rājarāja Cōḻā I.

[55] M. Arunachalam, *An Introduction to the History of Tamil Literature*, Gandhi Vidyalayam, Tiruchitrambalam, 1974, pp.143-144

[56] T.N. Ganapathy, *The Contribution of Tamil Siddhas to Dravidian Thought*, Dravidian University, Kuppam, 2008, p.18

[57] Maithili Thayanithy, *The Concept of Living Liberation in the Triumandiram*, Ph.D Thesis, Centre for the Study of Religions, University of Toronto, 2010, pp.78-80

It is to be noted that the *Tirumandiram* speaks of the Nava Nāthas or the nine Nāthasiddhas[58], as the foremost leaders in the path of penance. To some extent, the *Tirumandiram* played a dual role as (i) it was the pioneer of the Siddha cult in Tamiḻnādu and (ii) it gave a temporary respite to this cult by criticizing the *Yōga* of the Siddhas in favour of *Bhakti* as a sure means of God realization and thus generating a revivalism of the devotional Śaivism[59].

The *Siddhar Periya Ñānakkōvai*

'The Siddhas were revolutionaries from the Śaiva fold; they revolted from everything orthodox and ritualistic; they have left behind a substantial volume of good poetry, which employs the spoken language with power and banter to ridicule orthodox beliefs and customs; it had a tremendous effect on the masses'[60].

There is quite a decent volume of Siddha literature available in Tamiḻ language. The poems of those Siddhas are said to have been collected into a handy volume known as the *Pathinen Siddhar jñāna kōvai*; but the volume is not real siddha poetry. There are in it large sections of modern writing in prose and verse which will hardly fit in with the Siddha writings[61]. Besides, the British Museum library contains a large number of manuscripts of *cittar* works. The Mackenzie Collection[62] contains a long list of items connected directly or indirectly with the Siddhar. For e.g. Agastya's *autobiography* and a list of thirty eight works ascribed to him. *Agastya Vyākarna* described as 'a short grammar of the Tamiḻ language attributed to the sage Agastya, but the genuine works is supposed not to be in existence[63].

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[58] For more details about the Nava Nāthasiddhas, see S. B. Das Gupta, *Obscure Religious Cults*, p. 206.

[59] For more details see R. Venkatraman, *op.cit*, pp. 45, 48

[60] M. Arunachalam, *op.cit*, p. 209

[61] *Ibid*, p. 261

[62] British Museum Library No.620. g.34. For further details see Kamil V. Zvelebil, *The Smile of Murugan on Tamil Literature of South India*, E.J. Brill, Leiden, 1973, in foot notes, p. 218

[63] It also seems that Det Kongelike Bibliotek in Copenhagen contains under Cod. Tamoul 10, 39 and 48 some Cittar texts *viz*. *Rāmatēvar Pātal, Akattiya Cūttiram*, and *Cittar pātaltirattu*. The more interesting and promising items in the British Museum may be found under the following numbers: Orient. 1008 - Magic; Orient. 1048 – Medical; Orient. 5004, Orient.11726, and especially, Orient. 11727 - Śivavākkiyar; Orient. 11729 - Rāmatēvar; Orient. 11736 – Śivavākkiyar; further Orient. 11736.15.A.C. and Orient 11727.15. A.C. For further details see Kamil V. Zvelebil, (1973), *Op.cit.*, in foot notes, p. 218.

All the Siddhas are a group of mystics who revolt against caste and rituals and the established order of religion. They are no doubt *bhaktas* but their *bhakti* is of a different type. They are very critical of the practice of religion but always hold fast to the one Supreme God and pray for His Grace. Their revolt is only in the manner of their criticism and the challenge they throw to orthodoxy. They are generally against idol worship and they emphasize the worship of God in the heart. Except few, all the Siddhas have been Śaivas[64].

Based on their aims, Siddhas are classified under three broad groups viz., (i) the Sanmārga Siddhas, (ii) the Ñānasiddhas and (iii) the Kāyasiddhas. However, there is also another group forms the fourth one, who are 'a few siddha-like' poets who have been appended to the Siddha school by posterior generations, or who called themselves cittar or Siddhas without properly belonging to the esoteric group itself[65].

The *Siddhar Periya Ñānakkōvai* is an anthology of seventy nine songs by three groups of authors; such as 1. the nine Ṅānasiddhas, 2. nine Siddha like poets and 3. a few authors assuming the names of Gods, sages and poets[66]. Among them thirty two songs by nine Ñānasiddhas constitute as the source book for the Ñānasiddha School[67]. This popular work is available with many different editions[68]. However, the '*Siddhar Pātalgaḷ*' edited by Tha. Kovendhan (2001) is followed in this thesis[69].

With regard to the two primary sources mentioned above viz., *Tirumandiram* and the *Siddhar Periya Ñānakkōvai* there are two major difficulties. They are (i) no internal evidence in these works gives us any historical information, least of all dates

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64 M. Arunachalam, *Op.cit*, p. 264.

65 R. Venkatraman, *Op.cit*, p.7.

66 For e.g., Gods like Śiva and Subramaṉia; sages like Vālmīki and Agattiyar; and with the names of Kāyasiddhas like Koṅgaṇar, Saṭṭaimuṉi, Karuvūrār and Rāmadēvar; and poets like Vaḷḷuvar and Tirumūlar.

67 For further details see R. Venkatraman, *op.cit*, p. 14

68 There are also many earlier editions are available for e.g. Ramalinga Mudaliyar (1899) in two volumes; M.V. Venugopala Piḷḷai (1974), and another work edited by Aru. Ramanathan's which includes *Śivayōgasāram*, a prose work, which is a Tamiḻ translation by Puranānandar of the Hindi work, on Rāja *Yōga* by one Gurucarandās Bābāji, a follower of Gurunānak. Besides the above editions mentioned above, many paperback editions, reprinted several times are available in the market.

69 Tha. Kovendhan, *Siddhar Pātalgal*, Poompukar Pathipagam, Chennai in 2001, (6th edition). This work includes the collected songs of thirty-three Tamiḻ Siddhas with a brief introduction to them and also it ended with an appendix on glossary of important words.

of events or biodata of persons[70]; and (ii) the literature was not written to provide material for future historians, but for other contemporary purposes of a non-historical nature, perhaps necessary for those times. Even so, the theological and metaphysical content will be useful for this thesis since it is interested in these also. The difficulties inherent in utilizing this kind of literature straight away as a source for history are obvious[71].

From the *Kāyasiddha* School we have hundreds of *Tāntric* works dealing with one or more of the following, viz., alchemy, black magic, medicine, *yōga* and certain *Tāntric* religious rituals. The corpus of this literature is unwieldy and scattered. Though the academic world has not yet takes serious note of the total corpus of this literature, certain scholars[72] have expressed doubts about the genuineness of the innumerable works attributed to *Agattiyar* especially those on medicine[73]. Although we find large scale interpolations in these works, but at the core the *Kāyasiddha* material is discernible beneath all the layers of late accretions. For instance, the *Tirumandiram* contains all the features peculiar to the *Kāyasiddhas*, and it helps one as a touchstone in determining this core. But, being highly technical, the materials of this school cannot be easily handled by the uninitiated.

Siddhar Pātalgaḷ

This edited volume in Tamil̲ is a collection of songs of popular Tamil̲ Siddhas. Nearly songs of thirty three Siddhas are collected in this work. Of these thirty three, the first sixteen are classified under the General list, and the songs of Nandīśvarar, Rāmadēvar and Karuvūrār are classified under the *Pūjā Vithi*, and the rest of fourteen Siddhars are classified under the *Ñāna Pādalgaḷ* or intellectual songs. The numbers of songs of those Siddhas in general lists are as follows: Śivavākkiyar – 512, Avvaiyar – 310, collection of Paṭṭiṇathar's songs with various sub-titles, Bhadragiriyar – 231, Agapēy Siddhar – 90, Al̲ugani Siddhar – 40, Itaikkāttu Siddhar – 124, Kaduveli

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[70] The little data which are gleaned from the *Tirumandiram* are highly exaggerated; e.g., the author says 'I lived for seventy million *yugas' Tirumandiram*, verse 74; also see, Tha. Kovendhan, *op.cit*, *Pāmbāṭṭi Siddhar Pādal*, verse 25-39.

[71] R. Venkatraman, *op.cit*, p.15.

[72] M. Arunachalam, *Tamil Ilakkiya Varalaru*, *14th century*, (Tamil̲) p. 345

[73] P. Mohammad Abdullah Saheb: *Anuboha Vaiddya Navanitam*, Introduction, p. iii

Siddhar – 34, Pāmbāṭṭi Siddhar – 129, Kudambai Siddhar – 32, Koṅgaṇar – 111, Pīr Mohamed – 63, Vālaisamy – 185, Ulogāyutha Siddhar – 28, Enāti Siddhar – 4, and Kāḷai Siddhar – 3. Under the *Pūjā Vithi*, Nandīśvarar - 12, Rāmadēvar - 10 and Karuvūrār – 30 are given. Under the *Ñāna Pādalgaḷ* list, Shēśa Yōgi – 17, Tiruvaḷḷuvar – 19, Saṭṭaimuṉi – 103 (under *Ñānam* 1) and 101 (under *Ñānam* 2), Gaṇapathy Siddhar – 99, Agattiyar – 48, Romariṣi – 13, Tirumūlar – 11, Subramaṇiyar – 32, Vālmīgar – 16, Kāgapusuṇdar – 79 in first section, 65 in second section, and 16 under *Kuṛaḷ Veṇba*, Sūryānandar – 13, Paṭṭiṇa Siddhar – 100, Kārai Siddhar – 28, and Tadaṅgan Siddhar – 11 songs are given[74].

Besides the above, there are several works available in Tamiḻ which are said to be written by the Tamiḻ Siddhas. For instance, a Tamiḻ work entitled '*Śiva Mayam Kaṇda Siddhargal*' by Gānamanjari Sambathkumar[75], gives a hagiological account of eighteen known and thirty seven unknown Siddhas and their miracles. It also gives a list of works in Tamiḻ, which are said to be written by particular Siddhas, without any proper evidences or references. Some the works are given as follows.

Agattiyar: *Agattiyar Vaithiya Ratna Surukkam 360*, *Agattiyar Vāgada Veṇba, Agattiyar Vaithiya Kombi, Vaithiya Ratnāgaram, Vaithiya Kaṇṇādi, Vaithiyam 1500, Vaithiyam 4600, Sendhūran 300, Mani 4000, Vaithiya Sinthāmaṇi, Karpa Sūthiram, Āyuḷ Vēda Bhaśyam, Vaithiya Nūlgaḷ Pēruntirattu, Pasmam 200, Nādi śastra Pakśini, Karisil Paspam 200* are some of his works on medicine. *Śivajālam, Sakthi Jālam, Śaṇmuga Jālam, Āreḻuthu Antāti, Karmavyapagam, Vidhinūn Mūvagai Kāṇdam, Agattiyar Pūjā Vithi, Agattiyar Sūthiram 30* are some of his philosophical works[76]. *Agattiyar Kāviyam 12000* is useful to know about the life of Siddha Agattiyar.

Bōgar: As per the *Agattiyar Soumiya Sāgaram*, the following works are said to be written by Bōgar. They are: *Bōgar 12000, Bōgar Sabtha Kāṇdam 7000, Bōgar Nighantu 1700, Bōgar Vaithiyam 1000, Bōgar Vaithiyam 700, Bōgar Sarakku Vaippu 800, Bōgar Janana Sāgaram 550, Bōgar Karpam 360, Bōgar Upadēśam 150, Bōgar Rana Vakatam 100, Bōgar Jñāna Sārāmsam 100, Bōgar Karpa Sūthiram 54, Bōgar*

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[74] Tha. Kovendhan, *op.cit.,Passim*.

[75] Gānamanjari Sambathkumar, *Siva Mayam Kanda Siddhargal*, Sri Indhu Publications, Chennai, 2008.

[76] *Ibid*, p.20.

Vaithiya Sūthiram 77, Bōgar Mūppu Sūthiram 51, Bōgar Jñāna Sūthiram 37, Bōgar Astānga Yōgam 24 and *Bōgar Pūja Vithi 20*[77].

Kāgapusuṇdar: *Pusuṇdar Nādi*, a book on astrology, *Kāgapusuṇdar Jñānam 80, Kāgapusuṇdar Upaniṣad 31, Kāgapusuṇdar Kāviyam 33*, and a work on *Vēdānta* called *Kāgapusuṇdar Kuṛaḷ 16* are written by this Siddha[78].

Romariṣi: *Romariṣi Vaithiyam 1000, Romariṣi Sūthiram 1000, Amutha Kalai Jñānam 50, Romariṣi Pēru Nūl 500, Romariṣi Guru Nūl 50, Romariṣi Kāviyam 500, Romariṣi Mūppu Sūthiram 30, Rōmariṣi Iraṇdadi (Dōha) 500*, and *Romariṣi Sothida Vilakkam* are some of the works done by Siddha Romariṣi[79].

Kālaṅgi: in his *Jñāna Vindha Ragasyam 30*, Kālaṅgi explains about the Siddhar whom he met at Sadhuragiri, a popular abode of Siddhas near Srivilliputhur. Kālaṅgi *Vaithiya Kāviyam1000, Kālaṅgi Jñāna Sārāmsam 500, Kālaṅgi Vagārath tiraviyam 200, Kālaṅgi Jñānam 180, Kālaṅgi Karpa vithi 84, Kālaṅgi Jñāna Pūjāvithi 80, Kālaṅgi Taṇdagam 80, Kālaṅgi Pagarani 51, Kālaṅgi Indira Jāla Jñānam 46, Kālaṅgi Dīkṣavithi 35, Kālaṅgi Updēsa Jñānam 34, Kālaṅgi Sūthiram 33, Kālaṅgi Jñāna Vindha Ragasyam 30 and Kālaṅgi Jñāna Sūthiram29* are said to be some important works of Siddha Kālaṅgi[80].

Koṅgaṇar: *Koṅgaṇavar Vāda Kāvyam 3000, Koṅgaṇavar Mukkāndaṅgal 1500, Koṅgaṇavar Taṉikkuṇam 200, Koṅgaṇavar Vaithiyam 200, Koṅgaṇavar Vāda Sūthiram 200, Koṅgaṇavar Taṇdagam 120, Koṅgaṇavar Jñāna Chaithanyam 109, Koṅgaṇavar Sarakku Vaippu 111, Koṅgaṇavar Karpa Sūthiram 100, Koṅgaṇavar Vālaikkummi 100, Koṅgaṇavar Jñāna Mukkānda Sūthiram 80, Koṅgaṇavar Jñāna Venba 49, Koṅgaṇavar Āthiyandha Sūthiram 45, Koṅgaṇavar Mūppu Sūthiram 200, Koṅgaṇavar Urpatthi Jñānam 21* and *Koṅgaṇavar Suddha Jñānam 16* are some of the important works of Koṅgaṇa Siddha[81].

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[77] *Ibid*, p.39

[78] *Ibid*, p.46

[79] *Ibid*, p.49

[80] Gānamanjari Sambathkumar, *op.cit*, p.58.

[81] *Ibid.* p.68

Sattaimuṉi: *Sattaimuṉi Nigaṇdu 1200, Sattaimuṉi Vāda Kāviyam 1000, Sattaimuṉi Sarakku Vaippu 500, Sattaimuṉi Nava Ratṇa Vaippu 500, Sattaimuṉi Vākadam 200, Sattaimuṉi Muṉjñānam, Piṉjñānam 200, Sattaimuṉi Karpam 100*, and *Sattaimuṉi Uṇmai Vilakkam 51* are the few important works of Siddha Sattimuṉi[82].

Yā Gōpu or Rāmadēvar: This siddha has two names and also his works are classified into two sections as the works Yā Gōpu and the works of Rāmadēvar. There found nearly 15 works under the former one such as *Yā Gōpu Savukkāram, Yā Gōpu Vaithiya Sinthāmaṇi, Yā Gōpu Kaṇṇa Kāṇdam, Yā Gōpu Vaithiya Vāda Sūthiram, Yā Gōpu Suṇṇam, Yā Gōpu Senthūram, Yā Gōpu Vaithiyam, Yā Gōpu Kalaṅgam, Yā Gōpu Pañcāmitram, Yā Gōpu Kaṇṇa Sūthiram, Yā Gōpu Senthūra Sūthiram, Yā Gōpu Taṇdagam, Yā Gōpu Vāda Sūthiram, Yā Gōpu Senthūra Sūthira Surukkam* and *Yā Gōpu Suṇṇa Sūthira Surukkam* [83].

It is said that when this Siddha was at Saduragiri hills, he wrote several works on *Vaithiya Śastras* (medical treatises) in the name of Rāmadēvar, such as *Rāmadēvar Vaithiya Kāvyam, Rāmadēvar Jālam, Rāmadēvar Nigaṇdu, Rāmadēvar Kalai Jñānam, Rāmadēvar Śivayōgam, Rāmadēvar Paribhāśai, Rāmadēvar Taṇdagam, Rāmadēvar Patchaṇi, Rāmadēvar Parajñāna Kēsari, Rāmadēvar Vaithiya Sūthiram, Rāmadēvar Suddhi Muṛai, Rāmadēvar Aṣṭāṅga Yōgam, Mūppu Sūthiram* and *Rāmadēvar Paribhāśai Vilakkam*[84].

Gōrakkar (Gōrakṣa): Siddha Gōrakkar in Tamiḻ region wrote several works, but many of them are not available to us. Some of the missing works of Siddha Gōrakkar are *Gōrakkar Kāḷamēgam, Gōrakkar Kabāda Pūttu, Gōrakkar Kamalāñjani, Gōrakkar Brahmma Bōdam, Gōrakkar Marali Vādam, Gōrakkar Muṉi Jaṉma Sitthu, Gōrakkar Muṉi Āṉma Sitthu, Gōrakkar Jñāna Jyothi, Gōrakkar Kalpa Bōdam* and *Gōrakkar Nilaiyodukkam*.

Some of the books written by Gōrakkar which are available now are *Gōrakkar Chandira Rēkai, Gōrakkar Nāma Nāsattiravukōl, Gōrakkar Rakśamēkalai, Gōrakkar Muttāram, Gōrakkar Malai Vādakam, Gōrakkar Karpam, Gōrakkar Mukti Nēri,*

[82] *Ibid.* p.74
[83] *Ibid.* p.80
[84] *Ibid*, p.83

Gōrakkar Aṣtakarmam, Gōrakkar Sūthiram, Gōrakkar Vasāra Sūthiram, Gōrakkar Mūligai and *Gōrakkar Brahmma Jñānam*[85].

Macchamuṉi: *Macchamuṉi Kadaikkāṇdam 800, Macchamuṉi Kalai Jñānam 800, Macchamuṉi Nigaṇdu 400, Macchamuṉi Mūppu Dīkṣai 80, Macchamuṉi Tirāvakam 800, Macchamuṉi Vaithiyam 800, Macchamuṉi Pērunūl Kāviyam 800, Macchamuṉi Sarakku Vaippu 800, Macchamuṉi Vākaram 800, Macchamuṉi Yōkam 800, Macchamuṉi Tirumandiram 800, Macchamuṉi Vēdāndam 800, Macchamuṉi Jñānam 800, Macchamuṉi Kuṛunūl 800, Macchamuṉi Dīkṣāvaḻi 100, Macchamuṉi Taṇdagam 100, Macchamuṉi Jñāna Dīkṣai 50, Macchamuṉi Sthūla Sūkkuma Kāraṇa Jñānam 30*, and *Macchamuṉi Sūthiram* are the few important works of Siddha Macchamuṉi[86].

Karuvūrār: Karuvūrār who also called as Mahā Siddha wrote the following works: *Karuvūrār Vaithiyam 500, Karuvūrār Vāda Kāviyam 700, Karuvūrār Yōga Jñānam 500, Karuvūrār Palattittu 300, Karuvūrār Kuṛunūl Sūthiram 105, Karuvūrār Pūraṇa Jñānam 100, Karuvūrār Meichsurukkam 52, Karuvūrār Śiva Jñāna Bōdam 42, Karuvūrār Karpa Vithi 39, Karuvūrār Mūppu Sūthiram 32, Karuvūrār Aṣtamāsitthu (Māntharīkam)*, and *Karuvūrār Pūjā Vithi 30*[87].

Pulipāṇi: Siddha Pulipāṇi was considered to be the chief disciple of Siddha Bōgar of Paḻaṉi hills. It is said that Siddha Pulipāṇi wrote several works and some of them are *Pulipāṇi Vaithiyam 500, Pulipāṇi Sōthidam 300, Pulipāṇi Jālam 325, Pulipāṇi Vaithiya Sūthiram 200, Pulipāṇi Pūjā Vithi 50, Pulipāṇi Śaṇmuga Pūjā 30, Pulipāṇi Simiḻ Vitthai 25, Pulipāṇi Sūthira Jñānam 12*, and *Pulipāṇi Sūthiram 9*[88].

Tirumūlar: As already discussed, Tirumūlar is famous for his work *Tirumandiram*. However along with that, he also wrote several works in various fields. Some of his works are: *Tirumūlar Kāviyam (Grantha) 8000, Tirumūlar Siṛppanūl 1000, Tirumūlar Sōthidam 300, Tirumūlar Māntharīkam 600, Tirumūlar Salliyam 1000, Tirumūlar Vaithiya Kāviyam 1000, Tirumūlar Vaithiya Karukkidai 600, Tirumūlar Vaithiya Surukkam 200, Tirumūlar Sūkkuma Jñānam 100, Tirumūlar Pēruṅgkāviyam 1500,*

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[85] *Ibid*, pp.90-91.

[86] *Ibid.* p.94

[87] *Ibid.* pp.113-114

[88] Gānamanjari Sambathkumar, *op.cit*, p.168.

Tirumūlar Dīkṣa Vithi 100, Tirumūlar Kōrvai Vithi 16, Tirumūlar Dīkṣa Vithi 8, Tirumūlar Dīkṣa Vithi 18, Tirumūlar Yōga Jñānam 16, Tirumūlar Vithi Nūl 24, Tirumūlar Ārādhāram 64, Tirumūlar Patcahi Nūl 24, Tirumandiram (Pērunūl) 3000, Tirumūlar Jñānam 84, Tirumūlar Jñāna upadēsam 30, Tirumūlar Naduvaṇai Jñānam 16, Tirumūlar Jñānakkuri 30, Tirumūlar Sōdasa Jñānam 16, Tirumūlar Jñānam, Tirumūlar Kuḷigai 11, Tirumūlar Pūja Vithi 41, Tirumūlar Vyāthik Kūru 100, and *Tirumūlar Mūppu Sūthiram 200*[89].

Pulasthiyar: *Pulasthiyar Vaithiya Vātham, Pulasthiyar Vātha Sūthiram, Pulasthiyar Jñāna Sūthiram, Pulasthiyar Vaithiyam, Pulasthiyar Vaḻalai Surukkam*, and *Pulasthiyar Karpa Sūthiram* are few of the important works of Siddha Pulasthiyar[90].

Other *Tāntric* Works in Tamiḻ

The Vīra Śaiva cult which was propagated by Basava of the Kannada country during the middle of the 12th century was gradually spread into the Tamiḻ country after few centuries. From 16th century onwards, works on philosophical treatises, devotional poems, ethical books, *purānas*, and commentaries of this cult is available in Tamiḻ region. Rēvana Siddha was probably the first writer, who wrote *Aharādi Nighaṇtu*, a lexicographical work, and *Śivajñānadīpam*, a philosophical treatise. Most particularly, the *Śivajñānadīpam* is an excellent Śaiva Siddhānta work, in which the author devotes a few verses at the end of the treatise to explain the Vīra Śaiva concepts[91].

Śivaprakāśa Swāmi's works entitled *Prabhuliṅga Līlai, Siddhānta Śikhāmaṇi and Advaita Veṇba* are all important philosophical works of Vīra Śaiva sect, which belong to the 17th century. Śivaprakāśa's *Naṇṇēri* is probably the only book on ethics written by a Vīra Śaiva. It is a short poem of good maxims in easy language, studied even today by school children. *Basava purāna* by an unknown author is a very

89 *Ibid.*, pp.187-188.
90 *Ibid.*, p.214.
91 M. Arunachalam, *op.cit*, p. 222

ambitious large work of a later period, on Basava and other top figures in the Vīra Śaiva hagiology, but has poor poetic merit[92].

One of the important contributions of Śaivism to literature is its later devotional poetry. Long after the Śaiva canon was compiled, devotional literature has been growing and we find later day poets offering large volumes of their songs as devotional tributes at the feet of not only Śiva, but Śakti, Muruga and Viṉāyaka. There are innumerable such poems, both merely as devotional offerings, and also as literary *prabandha* pieces. Eminent writers in this field are Kumargurupara Swāmi and Śivaprakāsa Swāmi[93].

One aspect of the development of Śaiva literature is the writing of poems on Śakti. Poems on Muruga are found in *Paṭṭupāttu* and in the 9th Book (*Tirumuṛai*) of the Śaiva canon and poems on Viṉāyaka in the 11th Book (*Tirumuṛai*). Songs in praise of Śakti are no doubt found in *Silapadhikāram* but separate poems are not found in early literature. *Kavirāja Paṇdita* (16th century) has translated *Soundaryalahari* of Śaṅkara into Tamiḻ verse and though it does not rank high as poetry, it was the precursor of many more writings in praise of Śakti. *Sarasvati antādi* (12th century) and *Sakala Kalāvaḷḷi Mālai* (17th century) are in praise of Sarasvati. Varaguṇarāma Kulasēkara Pāndiya's *Ambikai Mālai* (16th century) and Kumara Gurupara's *Mīnākśi Ammai Piḷḷai Tamiḻ* are well known works in praise of Śakti; but *Abhirāmi Antādi*[94] (18th century) was instantly popular and remains so even today[95].

Paṭṭiṇattār pādal and *Tāyumāṉavar pādal* are anthologies of verses which were available to the compilers of the respective authors. *Paṭṭiṇattār*'s works such as *Kōyil Nānmaṇimālai, Tirukkaḻumala Mummaṇikkōvai, Tiruvidaimaruthūr Mummaṇikkōvai, Tiruvēgambamudaiyār Tiruvanthāti* and *Tiruvoṛṛiūr Oruba Orupathu* are some of his works which are included in the 11th Book (*Tirumuṛai*) of

92 M. Arunachalam, *Op.cit*, p. 223; he also authored the work *Nālvar Nānmaṇi Mālai*, about the four principal Śaiva saints. See Thamizhannal, *op.cit*, p. 303

93 M. Arunachalam, *op.cit*, p. 209

94 These kinds of songs on goddess Śakti have inspired the national poet Bhārati to sing his Śakti songs.

95 M. Arunachalam, *op.cit*, pp. 210-211

the Śaiva Canon[96]. *Tāyumāṉavar*'s work '*Parāparakkaṉṉi'* consist of rare philosophies in the simplest forms[97]. The latter half of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century witnessed the collection of many anthologies, and one among them is a selection of 1000 verses from Rāmaliṅga Swāmi for use in prayers[98]. Rāmaliṅga wrote in simple direct language coming from his heart. His most celebrated work '*Tiru-Aruṭpā*', consists of 5818 poems which are now divided into six chapters (*Tirumuṛai*)[99]. Thus, Tāyumāṉavar and Rāmaliṅga Swāmi complete the picture of later Śaiva literature[100].

There is yet another sector of poetic writing in Tamiḻ which are mostly related to philosophy, religion, architecture, astrology (for e.g. *Siddhar-ārūdam*), alchemy, medicine, chemistry, black magic, etc. However, these works are not generally considered in any account of Tamiḻ literature. Some of these works had been in existence from the 10th century onwards. The writers often assume such names as Agastiya, Bōgar, Danvaṇtri and Tirumūlar[101].

Koṅgumaṇdala Satakam

The *Satakam* is a type of poem which contains more than 100 verses each, generally in the very long *viruttam* metre, with a reference to some local deity in the second half of the last line, and containing in the other lines observations of life and living. They have had immense popularity till the first quarter of the 20th century. These works helped to keep alive many social traditions and conventions in the minds of successive generations, because a memorization of at least half a dozen *satakams*

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[96] There exists some controversy regarding the number and period of Paṭṭiṇaṭṭār. The one who authored above works are said to be lived in the 11th century and he belongs to the Trader Community. His real name was Tiruveṅkādar and his works are included in the 11th Book of the Śaiva canon. The other one is a Siddha whose name is Paṭṭiṇaṭṭu Piḷḷai and his songs are included into collection of Siddhar Pātalkaḷ, see Thamizhannal, *op.cit*, pp. 302-303

[97] Thamizhannal, *op.cit*, p. 304

[98] M. Arunachalam, *op.cit*, p. 257

[99] His other works are *Maṉu Muṛai Kaṇda Vāsagam*, a work based on the life history of Maṉu Nīthi Cōḻaṉ; and *Jīva Kāruṇya Oḻukkam*, a work advocating the non-killing of animals and vegetarianism.

[100] M. Arunachalam, *op.cit*, p. 209

[101] *Ibid.* pp. 273-74

was considered necessary for a beginner in literature[102]. One among the famous *satakam* is the *Koṅgumaṇdala Satakam* which belongs to the 18th century C.E.

The *Koṅgumaṇdala Satakam*[103] gives us many references about the Tami<u>l</u> Siddhas like Bōgar, Pulippāni, Koṅgaṇar, Itaikkādar, etc. It says that both Bōgar and Pulippāni are two great adepts in *yōga*, medicine and alchemy from Vaikāvūr[104]. Regarding Koṅgaṇar, it describes him as 'one capable of transmuting base metals into gold'[105]. Similarly one of the songs of *Koṅgumaṇdala Satakam* says that the Siddhar Itaikkādar is hailed from Koṛṛavanūr in the Koṅgu country[106]. Further it also gives reference to Karūr Siddha[107]. A difficulty found in this work is that it clubs Karuvūr Siddhar with Karuvūr Dēvar of 10th century, and generally says that Karuvūrār, the great Siddha born in Karuvūr in the Koṅgumaṇdalam, (i) and depicts him as accomplishing the *aṣtabandha* of a huge *liṅga*, by merely spitting his saliva or *Tāmbula* (by chewing betel leaves and arecanut)[108]; (ii) who made a tree shower fish and (iii) wrote the *Tiruviśaippā*. However, this work does not give any further detail regarding the places and circumstances under which these events took place. But very soon, these references were developed into elaborate legends by the anonymous author of the *Karuvūr Purāṇam*[109].

Sthalapurāṇas

Sthalapurāṇas are innumerable. There is a *purāṇa* for every little shrine in the Tami<u>l</u>nādu. It glorifies the shrine; the deity installed there, the temple tank and the temple tree. In fact, it is glorified with local legend and written with a religious bias. It may also be considered as a collection of local folk tales. Such books were first written in the 16th century and they continue to be written to the present day[110]. There

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[102] *Ibid.* p. 180

[103] For this study, *Koṅgumaṇdala Satakam*, written by Vijayamaṅgalam Kārmēgakkavi and compiled by T. A. Muthusamy Konar, Sadhu Press, Chennai, 1928, is followed.

[104] *Koṅgumaṇdala Satakam*, No. 36, Vaikāvūr is another name of Pa<u>l</u>a<u>n</u>i.

[105] *Ibid.*, No, 37, It is a work on Koṅgaṇa Siddha by Kārmēgakkavi, a Jaina author of 18th century.

[106] *Koṅgumaṇdala Satakam*, No, 38.

[107] *Ibid.* No, 34.

[108] This story is further elaborated in the *Karuvūr Purāṇam*, verse Nos. 62-71.

[109] See R. Venkatraman, *op.cit*, p.56.

[110] M. Arunachalam, *op.cit*, pp. 234-35.

exists several *Sthalapurāṇa* which carries information about the Siddhas of Tamil̲nādu, where they lived or connected with the local temples. One among them is the *Pal̲an̲ittalapurāṇam* of Bālasubramania Kavirāyar (17th century), which gives us stray references to Gōrakkar's visit to Pal̲an̲i and his miracles. It further says that he transformed himself into a fish and entered into a nearby pond, which consequently acquired the names *Matśya (macca) tīrtha* and *Siddha tīrtha*. The term *Macca tīrtha* is still in vogue at Pal̲an̲i[111].

From the above literary survey, it is clear that some of the existing *Tantras* are philosophical. Among such works, those belonging to Kaśmiri Śaivism are very important. Some works deal with various aspects of *Tantra*, such as *Dīkṣā*, *Guru*, *Śiṣya*, *Pañcatattva*, *Maṇdala*, *Mudrā*, *Yantra*, six *Cakras*, *Puraścaraṇa*, etc. Many works have, as their themes, the six *Tāntric* acts of *Māraṇa* (killing), *Vidvesana* (hating), *Stambhana* (paralyzing), *Vaśīkaraṇa* (controlling others), *Uccātana* (expulsion) and *Śāntikarma* (pacificatory rite). Kāli and her worship engage the attention of some writers. Forms of the goddess like Chin̲n̲amastā, Bhuvaneśvari, Tripurā, etc. are the subjects of some works. *Kaula* rites and different *ācāras* like *Vāmācārā*, *Vīrācāra*, etc. have been dealt with in certain works. *Pīthasthānas* like Kāmākhyā have been described in some works. Different kinds of *Sādhanā*, particularly *Śava-sādhanā* (meditation on a corpse), magical processes for the acquisition of different kinds of *Siddhi*, e.g. *aṣtasiddhi*; *yōga* and its accessories have been taken up in certain works. *Kuṇḍalini-yōga* figures very prominently. Rosaries for *japa*, *kumāri-pūjā*, *pūjā* in general, both external and mental (*mānasa*) *pūjā* or *antaryāga*, are some of the important topics which are generally discussed in the above *Tāntric* works.

Tāntric works in Indian languages other than Sanskrit are numerous and diverse. In South Indian languages, *Tāntric* Śaiva and Śakta literature is abundant, concerning, for instance, the cult of Kāli or the Siddhas or the ritual and devotional themes. There are also many poems, songs, and devotional or philosophical works written in other languages, and they still continue to appear today. Texts in Sanskrit form not only the majority of *Tāntric* literature, but also its essential part, for

[111] R. Venkatraman, *Op.cit*, p.53.

whatever role so-called popular elements may have played in its evolution; *Tantrism* belongs fundamentally to the learned Sanskrit tradition of India. Even at its popular level, Hinduism always remains closely knitted to this tradition. That is why even *Tāntric* works in vernacular languages have close links with Sanskrit literature, which provided them with their themes, terminology, and conceptual framework[112].

Thus, the similarity between these non-Tamiḻ works of the Siddhas of North India and the Tamiḻ Siddha works like the *Kuṇḍalini Yōga*, and other practices, mode of worship, their philosophies and so on are commonly found in all of the above Siddha schools of philosophy. These enable us to view the latter school in a pan-Indian perspective.

[112] Mircea Eliade, *op.cit*, vol. 6. p.366.

Chapter III

INSCRIPTIONS AND SCULPTURAL EVIDENCES OF NĀTHA-SIDDHA CULT IN SOUTH INDIA

As discussed in the previous chapters the period between 6th and 15th century C.E and after, witnessed a voluminous literary production in various Indian languages popularised the sectarian faiths of Pāśupatas, Śāktas, Kāpālikas and Kālamukhas, Bāuls, Mattamayūras, Gāṇapatyas and Nātha Siddhas of *tāntric* tradition. By the end of the 14th century, the process of assimilation and absorption between these diverse sectarian faiths was complete from which it emerged as a pan-Indian tradition/cult of the Nātha-Siddhas leading to the elevation of this cult of the popular genre to the level of elite religion. The Nātha-Siddha philosophy and cult received royal patronage in East and Central India, whereas in other parts of the country, it remained a cult of the masses. As a consequence in South India, we do not come across as many references to royal patronage to the Nava-Nātha/siddha cult.

Surprisingly, beginning from the early 14th century, coinciding with the emergence of Vijayanagara Empire, South India witnessed the deliberate patronisation of the cult of Nava-nāthas in the sculptural art of temples in every nook and corner of the empire. The Vijayanagara sculptors found an ingenious way of showing those human forms with characteristic appendages such as head dress, ear rings, necklaces, waist bands and other *yōgic* ritual items such as *yōga-paṭṭa*, *yōga-daṇḍa*, *Kamaṇḍala* etc. More importantly to differentiate and identify the *divine* Nava-nāthas from the simple nātha practitioners/devotees/followers, instead of engraving their names, they are shown with vehicles of animals indirectly indicating their personal names. Although '*described as mere decorative additions*'[1], the occurrence of these low relief engravings of Nātha Siddhas in association with or in proximity to the representations yogic exercises, postures, erotic and sexual representations and other *tāntric* rituals, hint at the close relationship between them. Moreover, the textual descriptions of the Nātha-siddhas along with their ritualistic items, preserved in the literary compositions and oral tradition from across the country, are represented in great detail in the sculptural representations. Infact, these

[1] Anna. L. Dallapicola and Anila Verghese, *Sculpture at Vijayanagar: Iconography and Style*, Manohar, New Delhi, 1998, p.79

textual and oral traditions help us in the identification of the Nātha Siddha representations and to differentiate between the representations of the Nātha practitioners, Siddhas and their yogic practices. The number of such low relief engravings in the temple art of the Vijayanagara and post-Vijayanagara periods, of both Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava affiliations, is so numerous that it is difficult to attempt a quantitative analysis. Since our survey of Nātha iconography is only partial covering temples explore randomly in various parts of South India quantification of the data will not yield any logical conclusions.

In this chapter, the inscriptional evidences indicating the patronisation of the Nātha-Siddha Cult and their sculptural representations are described and analysed. Since these Navanātha sculptures are shown with the animal vehicles, their names were identified and corroborated on the basis of textual references from across the subcontinent.

Epigraphical Sources of the Nātha Siddha cult

Inscriptions provide us the most authentic information about chronological position of the rulers; the social, cultural, economic and religious conditions. Therefore they are considered as the genuine records of history. Based on the information inscribed in these inscriptions are mostly datable to ancient and medieval period. Majority of these inscriptions record gifts to some social and religious institutions like temples, monasteries, village assemblies, individuals and so on. However, to study the history of Siddha cult of India in general and of South India in particular, the inscriptional sources ane not many. In this study all the reliable inscriptions issued by various rulers and published in the volumes of like *Annual Report on Epigraphy* (*ARE*), *South Indian Inscriptions* (*SII*), *Epigraphia Carnatica* (*EC*), *Epigraphia Indica* (*EI*) and other secondary sources which provide analytical discussion of such inscriptions, that deals with the Siddha Cult in South India are discussed. On the basis of available epigraphical sources an attempt is made to study the chronology of the Nātha Siddha Cult in south India.

Sōḻadēvanahalli Inscription, Karnātaka

Nātha cult was very popular in Karnātaka, which was believed to be a blend of Vajrāyāna Buddhism and Śaivism. Though there are no exclusive followers of the cult in Karnātaka, the centers of their activity are there even now. Gōrakṣanāth and Matśyēndranāth themselves are believed to have popularlised the cult in Karnātaka. Nātha *mathas* are found in many parts of Karnātaka beginning from Handi Badganāth in Belgaum district to Kadire and Viṭṭal in Dakśiṇa Kaṉṉada. Bhois of Gulbarga area are among the followers in Nātha Pantha[2]. This cult is also centered in the surrounding suburbs of Bangalore which is revealed by the sculptures found in the Ulsūr Somēśvara temple, Kalāsipāḷayam Jalakaṇtēśvara temple, Yōganandīsvara temple, Śiva temple of Āvani and other important temples of Karnātaka. The promulgation of Nāthism in Tulu-nādu and in Karnātaka which was under the influence of the Cōḻas is seen from the Sōḻadēvanahalli inscription[3] in Kaṉṉada characters of Rājēndra Cōḻa-I dated 1029 C.E.[4], which speaks about offering perpetual light to the God of Kukkānūr-nād in the Vikramacōḻa-maṇdala. This inscription found with two parts and each of them ends with an imprecation. The first part gives the following account of Nāthapanth.

> "*Yuddhamalla-Dēva's dandanāyaka, of the Bhāradvāja gōtra, Appanayya's son Vāmanayya, when his guru Mauni-bhaṭṭāraka obtained siddhi (or final emancipation), on his departure (or death), had Siddhēśvara made. ……… Chhāyā paramēśvara's son was named Stambhanātha. His son, versed in the meaning of the Kaḷāgama, was the yati Dvīpanātha. His disciple was born Mauninātha-munipa. The bearer of the commands of his sandals, the learned Rūpaśiva, devoted to the Sivāgama, shines in the world. For the temple of Siddhēśvara, Rūpaśiva-paṇdita is the master*".

Then the second part of the same inscription gives a detailed description of Nāthapantha in Chandrapuri as follows:

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[2] Suryanath U. Kamath (ed.) *Gazetteer of India, Karnataka State Gazetteer, Part I,* Bangalore, Government of Karanataka, 1982, pp.427-428.

[3] It is a pillar inscription. Now the pillar is at the Victoria Jubilee Institute, Mysore.

[4] G. Kuppuram, *Imperial Cholas in Karnataka: A Critical Study*, Sundeep Prakashan, New Delhi, 1986, p. 139

"At the foot of the sacred big tree (Sṛī Vṛksha) in Chandrapuri[5] *situated by the western ocean was stationed Ādinātha, by only thinking solely on whose lotus feet are destroyed the results of the (evil) deeds committed in former births. His disciple, waited on by kings, among the circle of great ones the greatest, was Chchhāyādhinātha, whose head the keenest rays (chhāyā) of the sun (dinanātha) do not affect. An intoxicated bee at his lotus feet, called Stambha, was Dahaḷādhinātha. Awakened by the dust from his lotus feet, was Dvīpanātha the world-renowned. His disciple, invincible by other disputants, was Mauninātha, in the form of Rudrā. Like a bee at his lotus feet, the best of the twice-born, was Vāmana, chief of ministers. At the time of his guru's decease, he caused to be made of stone, in the name of his guru, the Siddhēśvara temple, complete with enclosure, etcetera. And to the god Siddhēśvara 12 kaṇdugas of land in Bāṇapura were granted with faith by the daṇdanāyaka Vāmana."* This second part also ends with some imprecatory verses, with a following statement *"In this land the Siddhēśvara āchāri is master of 2 kaṇdugas*"[6].

This evidence testifies to the fact that the Nāthapantha was strong in Chandravara during the 11th century and the record helps us to know that Ādinātha, who was popular in the Tuḷuva country during the 9th-10th centuries was the first of the five nāthas (*ādi-pañcakam*)[7]. This inscription also testifies the arrival of the Nātha Siddha cult and its popularity in this part of peninsular India as early as 9th Century C.E.

Jagalūr Tāluk Inscription (1279 C.E)

One inscription from Jagalūr *Tāluk* of Karnātaka records the donation of a village by a general of the Yādava King Rāmachandra to a "*Yōgi* World conqueror" (*yōgi cakravarti*) named Prasāda Dēva. In this inscription we find what appears to be an enumeration of Prasāda Dēva's lineage: "Ādigadedunātha Caturaraginātha (Chauraṅginātha?) Gōrakhnātha Vistāradevī…nātha Kāhalinavi (Kanthadī?), Śurppāṇanātha, Lonanātha, Naranātha, pantha"[8].

[5] The village Chandrapuri is now the modern Chandravara village of the Honnavar taluk of North Kanara district.

[6] *EC*,Vol. IX, Nelamangalam Taluq, No. 1. (*EC.IX, NL.1*); Also see David Gordon White, *The Alchemical Body*, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 2004, pp. 95-96

[7] G. Kuppuram, *op.cit*, p.139.

[8] David Gordon White, *Op.cit*, p.94

Sōmnāth Inscription (1287 C.E)

An inscription (*Chintra Prasasti*) of the reign of Sāraṅgadhāra of the Chāḷukya dynasty of Gujarat, dated 1287 C.E., found in a long stone slab belongs to a temple at Sōmanātha or Dēvapaṭṭaṇa in Soraṭh (Kathiawad) is a lengthy one containing 66 lines. This inscription speaks about the consecration of temples and the installation of five *liṅgas* at this place. It also records the installation of five statues viz., Gōrakṣa (Gōrakhnāth), Bhairava, Āñjanēya (Hanuman), Sarasvathi, and *Siddhi* Viṉāyaka (Gaṇēśa) in the *antarālas* of the five temples[9].This inscription also mention the Kālamukha teacher Valmikarāśi.

Though the popular names of the Navanāthas were not found in these inscriptions, these are the earliest evidences which directly mention the names of the Nāthas, who lived in Karnātaka region. However, there is a chance of getting more evidences like this, through an extensive study on epigraphy of Kaṉṉada region.

Inscriptions of Tirunelvēli district, Tamiḻnādu

In Tamiḻnādu, so far no inscriptions are found speaking about the Siddha cult, though this cult is extended over the length and breadth of the region. According to R.Venkataraman[10], '*the epigraphs of Tamiḻnādu are singularly deficient with regard to the history of the Siddhas'*. However, mention must be made of a copper plate said to have been granted by one Rāmappayyan, the general of Tirumalai Nāyak (1623-59 C.E.) who ruled from Madurai, to one Pulippāṇi[11], who was considered as the disciple of Bōgar (c. 17th-18th century) a famous Siddha of Paḻaṉi hills. But, this is useless for the study of Siddha cult and it also seems to be a forgery. A pair of Tamiḻ inscriptions dated 1253 C.E., found in the Nellaiyappar temple of Tirunelvēli belongs to the 15th regnal year the Sundarapāṇḍiya[12] speaks about the donation of lands to a tradition of *Tapasis* (ascetics)[13]. Though these two inscriptions are not directly referring to the

[9] The stone inscription is now preserved in the Quinta of Don João de Castro at Cintra. For more details see "the Cintra Prasati of the Reign of Sāraṅgadeva", in *EI*., Vol. I, pp.271-312

[10] R. Venkatraman, *A History of the Tamil Siddha Cult*, Ennes Publications, Madurai, 1990, pp.12-13

[11] Later the line of hereditary successors of Pulippāni assumed this name as a title.

[12] *SII Vol. V, No.420, 421*; see also *ARE*, *No. 131 & 132 of 1894*.

[13] It is notable that the term *Tapasi* generally denotes the *sādhaka* who is an ascetic. For instance, "The *Mataṅga pārāmēśvarāgama* says that the *samayin* should serve his teacher in order to eventually be granted liberation, the *putraka* should be detached with evenness of behavior, and serve his teacher, his

Siddha cult in those regions, the contents of them indicate the existence Siddha cult during that period. The content of the inscription is as follows:

> "*Of the Tapasis, who were seen by Machunanar Vikaramachōladēva to recite the Tirugnānam in front of the Tirunelveli temple such as: Tavapērumān, one of disciples who came in the tradition of Viśhakanda Dēvar; Anābāyan, one of disciples who came in the tradition of Mahādēvar of Vīrasanthānam; Tirunaṭṭa pērumān, one of disciples who came in the tradition of Śivapātha-haradayar of Tiruvārūr north mutt; Niraiyangai Āduvān, one of disciples who came in the tradition of Paśupathi Dēvar, who was the protector of Biksha mutt; Dēvagal Dēvan, one of disciples who came in the tradition of Sundara Dēvar, of Tiruvarur north mutt; Tirugnāna Sambhandan, one of disciples who came in the tradition of protector of the Tirunagīsvara Bikśa mutt, Kalikadinthagaiyan, one of disciples who came in the tradition of Pasupathi Dēvar, the protector of Bikśa mutt; Tirunelveli Udaiyan, one of disciples who came in the tradition of Nilakanta Śiva, of Madurai South mutt; and to Tirunelveli Udaiyān, one of the disciples of Uyyakonda Dēvar, who came in the tradition of Al̲akiya Nāyaka, of Tirunelveli Māligai mutt; Śivamukthi kāṭṭinan, one of disciples who came in the tradition of Pasupathi Dēvar, who was the protector of Bikśa mutt; Aram Uraitha Pērumān, disciple of Anukka Vanthoṇdar, of Eastern mutt tradition of Tirunelveli south mutt; and to the persons who were all came in their traditions… eleven plots were donated to establish their mutt (in some specified boundaries)*".

Another inscription[14] of the same period found in the same temple sems to be a copy of the above inscription, but with some modifications in the amount of donated lands. The indirect details of *guru paramparā* i.e., lineage of teachers, the term *Pañcāchāries* who recite the *pañcaatcharā mantra* for worshipping lord Śiva, viz. *na-ma-si-vā-ya*, *Bhikśa* mutt are all comparatively related to the Siddha Cult in one or other aspects. So far in whole Tamil̲nādu region this is the only inscription indirectly mentioning about some of the aspects of Siddha Cult in this part of the country.

Siddharmalai Inscription, Tamil̲nādu

Siddharmalai is a hill located near Mēṭṭupaṭṭi and Pēraṇai Dam in the Nilakkoṭṭai Taluk of the Madurai District. There is a Śiva temple on the top of the

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god, and the sacred fire, while the *sādhaka* is an ascetic (*tapasvin*) whose consciousness is one-pointed in his repetition of *mantra* to attain his goal". (Gavin Flood, (Ed.), *Hinduism*, Blackwell Publishing Ltd., USA, 2003, pp.220-221).

[14] *SII*, Vol. V, No. 421; see also *ARE*, No. 132 of 1894. These inscriptions are found on the outside of the east wall of the third *prakāra* of the Nelliayappar temple, at Tirunelvely, a southern district of Tamil̲nādu.

Hill, in which a Tamil̲ inscription dated c. 1410 C.E, on the walls of the temple mentions the hill as Siddharmalai[15]. In the shrine containing the Sandals, is an inscription which refers to them as the Sandals of Sahajān̲andanātha, (c.14th century)[16], who was a pupil of the ascetic Sachidān̲andanātha and the author of the Manōramā, a commentary on the Ān̲andalahari[17].

Śrisailam Inscriptions, Āndhra Pradesh

The *Siddha* cult is the most important one at Śrisailam, which in all likelihood might have coterminous to the Pāśupata School. The epithet '*Siddha Kśētra*' given to Śrisailam was due to the popularity of this cult in Śrisailam. Many village names contain the prefix '*Siddha*' such as *Siddhavatam*, *Siddhapuram*[18], *Siddhasamudram*[19], *Siddhēśwaram*, *Siddhula gavi* and so on, which are mentioned in the inscriptions of Śrisailam. Towards the end of the 15th century, the assimilation of various *tāntric* schools culminates in the patronization of poets by the Saivaite Mathas, and one such poet, Gourana who is credited with the introduction of *Nava Nātha charitra* to the Telugu people wrote it in *dvipada* style at the instance of the chief pontiff *Sāntarāya* of Śrisaila Bhikśa Vritti *Matha*, and dedicates the same to him**.** Gourana accepts that his work was a copy of the same title written by one of his predecessor named Śrigiri *ayyagāru*. But Śrigiri's work is not presently available[20], but helps us to indicate the popularity of the Navanāthas in the Telugu speaking areas as early as 14th Century.

There are a few inscriptions found at Śrisailam which are purely related to the Siddha cult in that region. Foremost among them, a small label inscription in early 6th century characters was noticed on the rocky floor on the way to the Saraṅgadhāra *matha*. It reads "*Sarasa Paramātmā*". The word *Paramātmā* means a man possessing divine or yōgic powers. The prefixing word '*sarasa'* suggests his field of excellence; that is the art of *Rasa viḍyā* (alchemy). This small label epigraph therefore can reasonably be ascribed to certain Siddha of considerable prominence in those days.

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[15] *ARE* No.44, of 1908

[16] *ARE* No.47, of 1908; also Rep. Part II, p. 91, para 99

[17] T.V. Mahalingam, *Early South Indian Paleography*, University of Madras, 1974, p. 258

[18] *ARE* No.12, of 1915

[19] *ARE* No.34, of 1915

[20] P.V.P. Parabrahma Sastry, *Srisailam: Its History and Cult*, Srisaila Devasthanam Publication, Srisailam, 4th Ed., 2007, p.39.

The above mentioned label inscription "*Sarasa Paramātmā*" is also noticeable at Ālampūr temple complex[21].

Another inscription found at Śrisailam temple belonging to 1512 C.E., describes about the *Siddhis* of Siddhas, and also refers to Siddha Bhikśa Vritti[22], the presiding Śaiva Pontiff of Śrisaila and his devotee[23]. In another inscription (1585 C.E), we find reference to Nandinātha and Bhriṅginātha, and *mathas* functioning in their names[24]. Besides, there are names of the persons, names of the *mathas*, and villages with the prefixed with '*Siddha'* found in the inscriptions of Śrisailam as well as in the temples of its surrounding regions, which are helpful to study the Siddha cult of South India in general and Āndhra Pradesh or Śrisailam in particular.

Inscribed Nātha Sculptures of Kadapa, Āndhra Pradesh

In a small village in Kadapa district of Āndhra Pradesh, an inscription[25] speaks about the donation of land by one *Siddhayya* after worshipping *Sarva Siddha*s. The sculptural representations of individual *Nātha*s appears to be popular in the Āndhra region as evident from the presence of four sculptures of Mañjula *Nātha*, Mēgha *Nātha*, Sāraṅgadhāra and Gōrakṣa. It is likely that the sculptures of the remaining five *Nātha*s which have been installed there, but were subsequently lost. These sculptures however are not shown with vehicles, but individual names were engraved on the lower portions of the stone platforms. These sculptures seem to be much earlier than the Vijayanagara examples[26]. Interestingly an inscription dated C.E. 1245 of Nellore District of Āndhra Pradesh also speaks about '*Rasa, Rasāyana, Patañjāna, Khadga, yāga, Mantravada, Dhumravada, Garudavada* sects all of which popular in the region

[21] *Ibid*, pp. 30-31

[22] Even earlier to this inscription, the literary sources like *Nava Nātha Charitra* written by Gourana in Telugu indicate the popularity of this cult. Gourana belongs to the early half of the 15th century.

[23] P.V. Parabrahma Sastry, *op.cit*, p. 97

[24] Inscription No.27, P.V. Parabrahma Sastry, *op.cit*., p.115

[25] A. Butterworth and V.Venugopal Chetty (eds.), *A Collection of the Inscriptions on Copper plates and stones in the Nellore District*, 1990 (rep.), p.1330

[26] A. Umamaheswara Sastri, *Kadapa Jilla Sasanalu: Samskriti Charitra*, (Inscriptions of Kadapa District: Culture and History) in Telugu, Sahiti Samrajyamu, Proddatur, 1995, p.136

where a temple of Siddha Nātha Dēva is existing'[27]. This indicates the great antiquity of the Siddha/Nātha cult in these parts of the Āndhra region.

Inscriptions of Puduchērry

The inscriptions found in Puduchērry region also give some information about the existence of the Siddha cult in Puduchērry region during the medieval period. Few of the inscriptions found in the Varadarāja Perumal temple of Tirubuvaṉai in Puduchērry, contain terms like '*Māhēśvara'*. T.N. Gaṇapathy states that 'in Indian tradition Siddhas are generally classified into Nātha Siddhas, Rasa Siddhas, Māhēśvara Siddhas and Saṅgata Siddhas. Further he also says that the Siddhas from the south are known as Māhēśvara Siddhas, who advocates the pure method, the '*Suddha Mārga'* of *tantra*[28]. In that way, two inscriptions of Tirubuvaṉai temple refers to the word '*Māhēśvara'*, and donations made to feed them.

During the reign of Kulōṭṭuṅga Cōḻa I (C.E. 1113), 10 *mā* of land adjoined to the *matha* (Tirunāvukarasar *matha*) was donated by the village assembly of Tirubuvaṉai Mādēvi Chaturvēdi Maṅgalam, for the purpose of feeding the Māhēśvarars, who visits the Śiva temples of Tirubuvaṉai Mādēvi Chaturvēdi Maṅgalam. The inscription refers the incident as '*Śri Māhēśvarar amuḍhu cēiyya maṭappuramāga Iṛaippāth īyāka viṭṭa nilam*'[29].

Similarly, another inscription of the same temple mentions that, one Cōḻa Siṅga Rāyan alias Prithiṅgaraiyan, donated 2 *mā* of wet land and ½ *mā* of dry land at Rāja Nārāyaṇa Viḷākam, located in the above village, to the Tirunāvukarasar *matha*, for the purpose of providing food and accommodation to the *Śivayōgis* and *Māhēśvarars* who came and stayed there. The inscription refers the incident as, '*vaḻī vara varum Śivasōgikaḷum, Śri Māhēśvararum amudhu cēiyya kadavathaka'*[30].

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[27] N. Chandramouli, '*Siddha Cult In South India: Representations In Art And Their Ramifications'*, (Paper presented in the International Seminar on 'World Religions after September 11th: An Asian Perspective' Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, 17-19, January, 2009)

[28] T.N. Ganapathy, *The Philosophy of the Tamil Siddhas*, ICPR, New Delhi, 2004 (2nd edn.), pp.21-22

[29] *ARE*: No. 200 of 1919; see also G. Vijayavenugopal (ed.), *Inscriptions of Puducherry*, Vol. I, (Tirubuvanai Inscription No. 132), French Institute of Indology, Pondicherry, 2006, pp. 184.

[30] *ARE*: No. 203 of 1919; see also G. Vijayavenugopal (ed.), *Op.cit.*, pp. 190.

But according the *Tirumandiram*, the act of feeding devotees of Śiva is also known as *Māheśvara pūjā*. It is deemed higher than *dēvayajna* or *śrāddha* (a religious ceremony observed for the benefit of dead relatives). To some extent it is better than making donations to temples and Brahmans, and constructing temples. The *Tirumandiram* claims that feeding the devotees of Śiva and partaking of left-overs of their meals would result in liberation and elimination of sins. A separate chapter with ten verses entitled '*Māhēśvara pūjā*' in *Tirumandiram*[31] constitutes an appeal to the indigenous population to abandon Brahmanical religious practices and it advised to support the activities of vernacular *matha*.

akaram āyiram antaṇarkku īyil eṉ
cikaram āyiram ceytu muṭikkil eṉ
pakaru ñāṉi pakal ūṇ palaṭṭukku
nikarilai eṉpatu niccayam tāṉē[32].

("*Of what use it to gift Brahmans abodes in thousands// Of what use is to erect towering temples in thousands//It is beyond doubt these acts to not equal// The merits of feeding a jñāni at noon*[33])

Thus, the inscriptions of Tirubuvaṉai are almost related to both the terms as used by T.N. Gaṇapathy and Tirumūlar in his *Tirumandiram*. These inscptions testify the existence of the Siddha cult in this region during the medieval period.

Apart from the temple inscriptions, some of mathas in Villianūr region of Puduchērry also contain a couple of inscriptions which are related to the existence of the Siddha cult in this region. Three inscriptions are identified, of which two are found in the Villianūr Kalvi matha and one in the *Samādhi* of Rāma Paradēsi at Villianūr. They belong to 18th Century.

Inscription in the Kalvi Mutt – Samādhi Shrine at Villianūr-I

1. *Śivamayam*
2. *Vilvanallūr Mēyjñāna Māmuni Dēsikaravargal*
3. *Guru muhūrtham sathā sēvai*
4. *Rāyavēlūr Thuluva Vēllāla marabhu*
5. *Vēnkitasāmi Mudaliāravargaḷ Kaṭṭalai*

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[31] *Tirumandiram*, Verses. 1821-1830; The South India Saiva Siddhanta Works Publishing Society, Tinnevely Ltd., 2007 (rep.), pp. 717-721

[32] *Tirumandiram*, Verse. 1824

[33] Maithili Thayanithy, *The Concept of Living Liberation in the Tirumandiram*, Ph.D. Thesis, Centre for the Study of Religion, Toronto University, 2010, pp.101-102

6. *ppadi mērpadiyār Paṭṇi Anandhammāl*
7. *cēyitha tiruppaṇi Sālivāhana sakam*
8. *1794 varudam sēllum piṛasōthi varudam 1794*

This inscription speaks about the service rendered to the *Samādhi* shrine or its construction at the *Kalvi mutt* in Villianūr for 'Vilvanallūr Mēyjñāna Māmuṉi Dēsikar', by one Āṉandhammāl, who was the wife of Vēṅkitasāmi Mudaliār, belongs to the Tuḷuva Vēllāla tradition of Rāyavēlūr, in the *Saka* year 1794 (1871 C.E)[34].

Inscription in the Kalvi Mutt – Samādhi Shrine at Villianūr-II

1. *Kaliyuga sigārtham 4040*
2. *Vigāri varudam Vaikāśi mātham 20 m Nāl*
3. *Tiruvakkarai Āthinam kalvimadāthi-*
4. *pathi gurumuhūrtha kōvil tiruppani*
5. *ceivitha dharmakartha Puduvai*
6. *Vallur Mēzhivān gōthiram*
7. *Taraghu Suppurāya Mudaliār Kumā*
8. *ran Arunāchala Mudaliār*
9. *tharumam*
10. *subhamasthu – Śivamayam.*

This inscription speaks about the service rendered or renovation made by one of the trustees Aruṇachala Mudaliār, son of Taragu Suppurāya Mudaliār, who belongs to the Puduvai Vallur Mēḻivān *gōthira* to the *Samādhi* shrine of the pontiff of *Kalvi matha* of Villianūr which belongs to the Tiruvakkarai Āthinam, on 20th day of the Tamiḻ month Vaikāśi of Tamiḻ year Vigāri, of Kaliyuga sigārtham 4040 [35].

The Dairy of Āṉanda Raṅga Piḷḷai (1709-1761)

Āṉanda Raṅga Piḷḷai, the Chief Dubash of the French in Puduchērry is famous for his voluminous Diary covering a period of twenty five years until his death, in which he records many events from the year 6th September 1736 to January 1761 C.E. recorded encyclopedic information pertaining to the contemporary happenings in India and elsewhere. Among his predecessors or contemporaries, none can match him in terms of the wealth he possessed, the influence he wielded within the French Company and outside in the contemporary political and economic fields, and above

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[34] See also G. Vijayavenugopal (ed.), *Op.cit,* (Villianūr Inscription No. 416), p. 372. And also see Villianūr N. Venkatesan, *Op.cit,* p.185.

[35] This inscription belongs to the 19th century, (C.E. 1839), but the *Saka* year (4040) mentioned in it was erroneous. See Villianūr N.Venkatesan, *Op.cit*, p.184; see G.Vijayavenugopal (ed.), *Op.cit*, p. 372.

all in sticking to his native mind, beliefs, customs and practices despite his high standing in the French society. In terms of his virtuous qualities of head and heart, intellectual and business capabilities, Āṉanda Raṅga Piḷḷai can be aid to be far ahead of his times, despite being a product of the 18th century south India[36]. His sets of diaries were also used in this study as one of our primary sources of reference on the Siddha cult in Puduchērry. In volumes I and II, Piḷḷai gave some references about the Bommaiya Mutt, Mortāṇdi and Ambalaṭṭādum Mutt which continue to be well known *Siddha Kśētras* in Puduchērry even today.The dairy of Āṉanda Raṅga Piḷḷai also gives us some useful information in relation to the then celebrated Siddhas of Puduchērry such as Bālayya Sāmi, Ambalathādum Sāmi etc. In fact, it is the very earliest and reliable source providing some useful information about the chronological position of some of the Siddhas of Puduchērry.

Bommaiyyā Mutt

Bommaiyyā *mutt* is located in the Bommaiyār Pāḷayam (which is named after Bommaiyyā). This mutt belongs to the part of Mailam Bommapura *Āthinam*. References are found in the Dairy of Āṉanda Raṅga Piḷḷai about the Bālaiyya Sāmy of the Bommaiyā *mutt*. Even today it is in a well flourishing state. At present it is famous because of Siddhar Śivajñāni. Piḷḷai gives some of the relationship that prevailed between the French administration and the mutt in his Dairy. Some of the excerpts taken from the Dairy regarding those *mutts* are given below:

Dupleix's visit to Bommaiyyā Mutt

> "*Monday (14th December, 1744) or 3rd Margazhi of Raktakshi - This morning at 6, the Governor, M. Dupleix, who was at Mortandi Chavadi, repaired to my choultary at Tiruvengadapuram, break-fasted there at 8, dined at noon, and at 4 in the afternoon, proceeded to the Matt of Balaiya Swamiyar at Bommaiya Palaiyam, to pay him a visit. The Governor and his wife presented a gift of six yards of broad-cloth*

[36]See Alalasundaram, R.1998. *The Colonial World of Ananda Ranga Pillai 1736 - 61*. Pondicherry; Chandramouli, N., "Notices of Telugu Land, Language and People in the Diary of Ananda Ranga Pillai:The Dubash of the French in Pondicherry (1736-61)", *Proceedings of the Andhra Pradesh History Congress.35th Session*, Kuppam, 2010, pp. 229-236; "Memory, Metaphor and Text: Bobbili War in the Diary of Ananda Ranga Pillai (1736-61), the Dubashi of French in Pondicherry" in Chandramouli, N.,(ed) *Poduke –bandikere-Puducheri – Pondicherry: Researches into the History & Culture of French and Indian Pondicherry*. Puducherry: Historical Society of Pondicherry, 2015, pp. 37-48; Srinivasachari, C.S., *Ananda Ranga Pillai: The 'pepys' of French India,* Asian Educational Services, New Delhi, 1940 (Reprint1991), pp. 339-345.

and two bottles of rose-water to the Swamiyar, bowed very respectfully, and saluted him. He thereupon gave them his blessing. They afterwards proceeded to Puliyantoppu, here they partook of some refreshments, and drank coffee and thence they returned to Mortandi chavadi"[37].

Death of the Bālaiyya Swāmi

"Saturday, 21st May 1746, or 11th Vaikasi of Akshaya… This afternoon at about 2, Balaiya Swamiyar, the chief of the Matt of Bommaiya Palaiyam, quitted this world for Kailasa. He was installed in the year Subhakritu (1722), and served twenty four and odd years. During his tenure of office, all the subordinate ascetics were like so many Balaiya Swamies, each being an independent governor. They have ruined the institution, and brought discredit on it. What the character of his successor will be is not known. This disposition of the deceased was more that of a cow than a human being. Such was the will of God"[38].

Death of the Ambalaṭṭādum Swāmi

In his *Dairy*, Piḷḷai refers about the death of Ambalathādum Sāmy. The description given him regarding his death is more resembles to the final stage of the Siddhas i.e. the *Samādhi* of the Siddhas. Besides, the 10th Pontiff of this mutt Nāgaliṅga Swāmy is also mentioned in the work of C.S. Murugesan[39] as a Siddhar. The Dairy narrates the incident of the death of Ambalathādum Sāmy is as follows.

"This night, two Indian hours after sunset, Ambalattadum Aiyar, the priest of the Vikrapandi Chettis who reside here, expired. His corpse was interred in a sitting posture, in the premises of the very matt over which he presided. Having had a presentiment of his approaching end, he, on Sunday the 26th Ādi [7th August 1746], nominated Kanakasabhai Tambiran as his successor. The latter, who had a tangled head of hair, was, up to the time of his appointment, his personal attendant, escorted him to men of consequence, and helped in superintending the affairs of the institution. Nominating as his successor, the retiring priest placed on his neck the sacred rosary, composed of clusters of beads-five in each-which he had hitherto worn, and prostrated himself in homage at his feet. The ascetics present, and all his disciples, followed his example. Then, addressing the assembly, he said: "I have installed this man as your head. I shall betake myself tomorrow evening to Kailasa. You must take care of the matt, and manage its affairs efficiently". His death took place as he had predicted. His successor, a handsome

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[37] J. Frederick Price, (ed.), *The Private Dairy of Ananda Ranga Pillai, Vol. I*, Superintendent, Govt. Press, Madras, 1904, p. 264. (Henceforth *Dairy*)

[38] *Dairy, Vol. II*, 1907, p. 32

[39] C.S.Murugesan*, Puducherry Siddhargal,* Shankar Pathipakam, Chennai, 2007, pp. 35-42

person with a bright face, is about forty-five years old, and seems to be fitted for the office"[40].

Tuṛaiyūr Pacchai Kandappaiyar and Installation of Bālaiyya Swāmi

"Thursday, 27th October 1746, or 14th Arppisi of Akshaya. The following was the principal event of today. This morning, at about five or six Indian hours after sunrise, Turaiyur Pachai Kandappaiyar, who had been leading the life of an ascetic on the Paḻani hills, was installed as the head of the matt of Balaiyar, at Bommaiya palaiyam. Owing to the incapacity of Balaiyar, who died on the 11th of Vaigasi [21st May] last, each subordinate Tambiran[41] *was allowed to exercise uncontrolled powers, and in consequence of this, the institution was very badly managed. The conduct, efficiency, luck, and quality of the administration, of the man installed, this day, remain to be seen.*

I intended being present at the ceremony, but could not attend, as I was then very busily engaged. I, however, forwarded, through Arumuga Pandaram, two yards of red broad-cloth"[42].

"Pachai Kandaiyar of Turaivur, who had come to assist at the installation of Balaiya Swami, and who was on his way back to Turaivur, intimated his desire to visit Pondichery. I obtained a pass for him, to enter the town, and he accordingly came"[43].

"Subsequently, I brought before the Governor the Pandarams[44] *who were the bearers of gifts of fruit, sugar, and sugarcandy, which Balaiya Tambiran, of Bommaiyapalaiyam, had sent to him on the occasion of his installation. I obtained for them permission to take away the contributions to the matt, which had been detained at the custom-house. The Governor directed me to issue the necessary notice to the officer in charge"*[45].

"In the afternoon, I went to the gardens, and thence to Kambalaiyar's house, to visit Pachai Kandaiyar, who was staying there, and who had come from Turaiyur, to assist at the installation of Balaiya Swami. I took with me two yards of broadcloth, which I presented to Pachai Kandaiyar, before whom I prostrated myself. He is a man of pleasing manners, a great scholar, and possesses a deep knowledge of Sanskrit and Tamiḻ. I therefore conversed with him for about two Indian hours.

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[40] *Dairy, Vol. II*, pp. 180-181

[41] *Tambirān* means a quasi-monk, bound to celibacy; in token of which he wears red garments, wears his hair tangled, is generally learned, and is qualified to perform the *Śiva-pūjā*.

[42] *Dairy, Vol. III*, 1914, p. 41

[43] *Dairy, Vol. III*, p. 65

[44] *Paṇḍārams* are the Hindu mendicants in the south of India, of the *Sūdrā* caste; often officiating as ministrant priests in the temples of Siva.

[45] *Dairy, Vol. III*, p. 72

Having obtained his permission to depart, I went at 6, to the Governor's house"[46].

As said before, royal patronage to the Nātha-Siddha cult in South India during medieval period is very limited. A few available inscriptions starting from the early decades of the 11th century speaks about Āthinātha, the first of the legendary five Āthināthas (Āthipañchakam) and installation of individual sculptures of Gōrakṣanātha, Caturarāninātha (Chauraṅginātha?), Mañjulanātha, Mēghanātha, Sāraṅgadhāranātha in the temples maintained by Kālamukha teachers. These inscriptions indicates that at least by 10th century C.E., in the Karnātaka and the Āndhra regions the Nātha-Siddha cult was so popular that the native as well as conquering rulers started patronising the cult. By early 12th century, the cult appears to have spread into the Tamil region also as indicated by the Tirubhuvanai (Tirunāvukarasar *Matha*) inscriptions of Kulottuṅga Cōlā I, which speaks about a large population of Māhēśvarās of the Kālamukha/Nātha-Siddha faith. It is pertinent to mention here that the Cōlā rulers had Kālamukha teachers as the royal preceptors who were endowed with agricultural lands, *mathas* and Śiva temples. But in the Tamil region we do not have any evidence of the temples of Nātha-Siddhas as found in Karnātaka and Āndhra regions. The only exception in this case is the Śiva temple of Bāhūr, datable to the reign of Raśtrakūta king Kriśṇa III which is the only Śiva temple named as a Nātha (*Mūlanātha*).

Emergence of the Temple as a Centre of Tāntric Rituals

The Bhakti cult of the Tamil region gave significant impetus to the construction of Temples in which the image or icon of the god or goddess was the medium through which a devotee can offer or transfer his devotion to God, through *pūjā*. The origin of image worship in India can be traced back to the early *Vēdic* times. To a *sādhaka* who can visualize and experience the supreme god (*parabrahman*) in him, there is no need for a temple or an icon of God; but to those who cannot attain this kind of realization, on the physical plane, the image of the god in a temple provide the necessary platform for the spiritual enhancement and emanicipation. Temples of the medieval period occupy an important place in *tāntric* literature. The texts of the Śaiva Siddhānta of the south, contain lot of description and

[46] *Ibid*, p. 81

discussion on the construction of temples, installation of deities and temple rites in *tāntric* mode[47]. Based on the tāntric ideas, there was a spurt of temple building activity in South India from the beginning of the 11th century C.E. The activity got speeded up in the second half of the 11th century and continued till the end or the 12th century. Some of the temples of the 12th century also contain parts of the 11th century architectural members, which show the different phases of their renovation. Therefore major temples of this region are the products of at least two phases of architectural activity: a) Temples were constructed towards the end of the 11th century and rebuilt or renovated in the second half of the 12th century. b) After the mid-12th century, the building and patronage activity got an unprecedented impetus. The building activity slowed down after the commencement of 13th century and stopped by the mid-13th century. Temple building certainly continued in the second half of the 13th century also, but it was the final phase of the architectural activity of this region. The temples which can be assigned to the 13th century show a decadent phase. A Few of the temples of south Indian region were repaired or altered in the late Vijayanagara period[48].

Nātha Cult during the Vijayanagara Period

The Rāyās of Vijayanagara consciously promoted and patronized diverse sectarian religious cults[49]. The Nātha cult attained prominence with the establishment of the pan-south Indian Vijayanagara Empire. The Siddhas and Nāthas were elevated to a superhuman status during this period. However, there are no clearly identifiable extant independent sculptures or large reliefs of either the Siddhas or the Nāthas found in any temples of the period. On the contrary, among the Vijayanagara sculptures, curious ascetic Figures seated on different creatures are found mostly on the pillar reliefs and outer walls and gopuras of the temples.

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[47] Gavin Flood, *The Tantric Body: The Secret Tradition of Hindu Religion*, I.B. Tauris, London, 2006, p. 82. Temple acted as a great center for executing or employing such *Tāntric* rituals, as quoted in the *tāntric* texts. Temple *tāntrism* continues into present times in temples of Tamiḻnādu and especially in Kēraḷā. In fact, constructions of temples are also based on *Tāntrik* ideals. Even sculptures of the more extreme cults of goddesses, the *Yōginis* were also largely expressed in temples during the early medieval period.

[48] Rajaram Hegde, *Temple Patronage in Medieval Karnataka: with special reference to the Banavasi-12000*, Lecture Series 12, ICHR, SRC, Bangalore, 2006, p. 5

[49] Apart from Hindu religion, many cults and religious traditions including Jaina and Islamic were incorporated by the Vijayanagara rulers. Dallapiccola, *Op.cit*., p. xiv.

During the one and half centuries of the history of the Vijayanagara Empire under the Saṅgama and Sāḷuva dynasties (1336-1505 C.E.), temple art and architecture had flourished. Particularly in the sixteenth century, the activities of temple construction made significant progress. Among the various rulers, Kṛśṇadēvarāyā was one of the most celebrated emperors of Vijayanagara Empire. He started his rule with the innovatory architectural additions and became the generous patron of temple constructional activities. Though he was in power for a short span of two decades (1509-1529 C.E.), he made generous grants to all temples, as well as made additions to the existing temples and to some extant built entirely new temples in many parts of south India[50]. The principal reason behind the construction of the temples by the kings is that it will add glory the deity as well as the king[51]. The temples built during his period and by his successors all portioned with the tāntric sculptures, which mostly included the low-relief sculptures of the Nātha-Siddhas.

Thus, under the Tuḷuvas starting from Krśṇadēvarāyā, large temple complexes, with multiple pillared halls and colonnades, especially the *maṇdapas* to facilitate the increase in temple rituals and festivals, with towering entrance *gōpuras* and often with colonnaded chariot-streets or bazaars in front, came into existence. The *gōpura* is principally a development of the 11th century middle-Cōḻā period of temple construction in Tamiḻnādu. After a long gap of hundred years, the Vijayanagara architects revived the *gōpura* structures as well as they made it a pan-south Indian feature of temple architecture, spreading across the whole of Tamiḻnādu and much of Āndhra Pradesh and Karnātaka[52], in which most of the *Tāntric* images portraying the *tāntric* rites, images of Nātha-siddhas are sculpted in different styles and forms, either in stucco in the upper part of the *gōpura* or in the granite in the lower parts of the *gōpura*. More particularly, the spread of sculpting *tāntric* images in the pillar reliefs gained popularity only during the Vijayanagara period.

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[50] Y. Subbarayalu, ‘The Pilgrimage of Krsnadevaraya and its Political Implications’, in Shrinivas Ritti and Y. Subbarayalu (eds.), *Vijayanagara and Kṛśṇadevaraya*, ICHR (SRC), Bangalore, 2010, p. 52

[51] Gavin Flood, *Op.cit*, p. 80

[52] Anila Verghese, ‘Architectural Innovations of Krsnadevaraya on the Occasion of His Coronation’, in Shrinivas Ritti and Y. Subbarayalu (eds.), *Op.cit*., 2010, pp. 13,24

Spread of the Tāntric Art in other parts of south India

Within a span of nearly 200 years of Vijayanagara rule, the brick masonry temples were converted into stone, the stone temples were dismantled and reshaped or the same temples were added with new components. All this happened along with the growth of artisanal communities in south India and also in the inter-regional influence of classical patterns either by direct migrations or through education network[53]. It is said that many service caste people migrated from Āndhra Pradesh and Karnātaka during the reigns of the Telugu rulers in some parts of Tamiḻnādu. Mark (2001) writes that when Krśṇadēvarāyā (1509-1529 C.E.) was ruling Vijayanagar[54], he extended his territory to various parts of the Tamiḻ country. In order to control and dominate Tamiḻnādu, he sent Narasa Nāyaka to rule Chēra territories and Nāga Nāyaka to rule Pāṇdya territories, which were in Tamiḻnādu. So accompanying the warriors of Narasa Nāyaka and Nāga Nāyaka, some people were taken for cooking food, clothing and shelter. Thus, there may be a possibility that during this time along with other service caste people, other skilled persons like artisans, sculptors, masons, etc. also migrated to Tamiḻnādu and engaged in the temple building activities. Along with these artisans, the art and the *Tāntric* Nātha-Siddha cult might have spread to other parts of the south India.

Sculptural Representations of Nāthas and Siddhas

In the present study, iconography plays an important role in identifying the images of the Nāthas, Siddhas and their practice of *Tāntric Yōga*. Like many other sculptures, these images give visual support for understanding the existing cult of Siddhas, Nāthas and other *Yōgis*, their activities and their significance. At the same time, the basic art representations of the Siddhas and Nātha Siddhas in the temple sculptural art of various periods are mostly identified on the basis of textual descriptions which indicate the wide popularity of the Siddha cult all over South India with some exemptions, at least from 16th century and after. Most of these sculptures are found in the pillars of the *maṇḍapas* in the temples.

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53 Rajaram Hegde, *Op.cit*, p. 3

54 See Mark, *Arunthathiyar: Vāḻum Varālaru*, (Tamiḻ), (*An exclusive history of the Arunthathiyars)*, Nāṭṭār Vaḻakkāṟṟiyal Āyvu Maiyam, St. Xavier College, 2001

As discussed earlier, Śrīsailam has been an important *Siddha-Kṣētra* which was famous as the seat of the Atimārgika sects such as Pāśupatās, Kāpālikas, Kālamukhas, Navanāthās and Śāktas.The exterior wall of the Mallikārjuna temple with its reliefs is generally believed to be of the early Vijayanagara period. The Telugu work *Navanāthacharitramu* by the poet Gaurana, completed in the first quarter of the fifteen century, mentions the names of some members of this cult who preached in Āndhra. It is interesting to note that the poet dedicated this work to god Mallikārjuna of Śrisailam.

In the 15th and early 16th centuries, there is a profusion of images of ascetics, *Yōgic* exercises and other *tāntric* elements and scenes in almost all the temples of south India. For the identification of the Nātha Siddha representations the most important location is the *prakāra* wall of the Mallikārjuna Temple at Śrisailam, Āndhra Pradesh and the Hazararama temple of Hampi, Bellary district, Karnātaka. Both these temple complexes have the early forms of Vijayanagara Art. At these two places the representations of the Navanāthas, *yōgic* exercises, and other *tāntric* elements like *yantras*, *cakras* and sexual scenes portray the early stylistic forms, such as low-relied engraving, archaic features of representing the head dress etc. Among all the temple of south India in only two temples: Sōmēśvara temple at Ulsūr, near Bangalore and Jalakaṇṭēśvara temple, Kalāsipāḷayam also near Bangalore, Karnātaka we have noticed the entire set of the representations of the Navanāthas. Starting from these temples, the present study surveyed the entire south India to study and understand the stylistic variations in the Nātha Siddha representations. The sculptural data is analysed by studying the literary descriptions of the Nātha Siddhas, their ritualistic practices, philosophy and personal adornments, appendages etc, collected during the latter part of 18th century by the pioneers such as G.W Briggs which helped in understanding the intricacies of the Nātha Siddha representations.

The Nava Nāthas

Navanātha sculptural representations and other sculptures of Siddhas, *Yōgis* and *Yōgic* exercises, *Tāntric* symbols, rituals etc., found in the every nook and corner of Vijayanagara temple art have no evolutionary stages so far the temple art is concerned. On the contrary, during the Vijayanagara period itself and afterwards one

can observe many stylistic developments in their depictions. Out of the innumerable low relief sculptures of the Vijayanagara period which runs into several thousand across South India to identify the Nātha-Siddhas and other related representations of *tāntric* art, we searched for textual references which provide physical description of the Nātha-Siddhas, their appearance personal appendages, hairdo, manners and practices, ritual paraphernalia and their body language. Briggs in his monumental work had widely quoted from literary and oral traditions, from Punjab, Kaśmir, Nepal, Bengal and other places, which describe the above features of Nātha-Siddhas. Even the *dōhās* of Kabir give a description of the *Nāthapanthis* such as ear-rings, the patched coat, postures, the horn, ashes, the wallet, the club, matted hair and their faults of drinking and hypocrisy[55]. Interestingly, even the Kālamukhas are described as wearing a horn to produce the sound of a roar of a lion which indicate the assimilation of the *Tāntric* sects of the different parts of the sub-continent under the banner of the Nātha-Siddhas by the end of 13th century. Briggs also has recorded the descriptions of Mīṉanātha and Gōrakṣanātha which are very helpful in understanding the intricacies of the Navanātha representations of the Vijayanagara period.

Since the Navanātha cult absorbed most of the regional idioms, several lists of Navanāthas appear in different literary works. Even at a sub-regional level, different works have different lists of Navanāthas as such identification of the Navanāthas in the sculptural art of the Vijayanagara period, poses a challenge and an attempt is made to identify them on the basis of their vehicles which are prefixed to their personal names (such as *Mīṉa*-nātha/fish, *Vyāli*-nātha/vyāli, mythical animal, *Nāga*-nātha/snake, *Kūrma*-nātha/tortoise, *Varāha*-nātha/boar etc) in the literary descriptions and legendary stories. To understand the *Tāntric* elements in the Vijayanagara art also the *Tāntric* literary works discussed in chapter two are useful.

G.W. Briggs in his work mentions the names of *Nava-Nāthas* as *Gōrakṣanātha, Matśyēndranātha, Carpatanātha, Maṅgalanātha, Ghugonātha, Gōpinātha, Prānanātha, Suratanātha* and *Cambanātha.* (But he didn't speak about their representations in the sculptural art)[56]. M.S. Purnaliṅgām Piḷḷai also gives the names of nine famous Siddhas, as *Sathya nāthar, Sakotha nāthar, Āthi nāthar, Anāthi*

[55] See Briggs, G.W, *Gorakhnāth and the Kānphatayogis*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1938. pp. 238-9

[56] *Ibid*, p.136.

nāthar, Vakuli nāthar, Mathaṅka nāthar, Macchēndra nāthar, Kadēndra nātha and *Kōrakka nāthar*. From among many such lists in circulation during that period, the following common names viz., *Mīṉanātha* (*Matśyēndranātha*), Chauraṅgi (*Jālandhara*), *Gōrakṣanātha, Virupākśanātha, Mēghanātha, Siddha Nāgārjuna, Khanikanātha, Mañjunātha, Buddha Siddha* or *Vyāli Siddha* are identified from the Telugu literary work *Nava Nātha Charitra* by Gourana[57] (see appendices of the lists of Nātha Siddhars)

For the identification of the navanāthas in a group, the sculptural reliefs at Ulsūr, Kalāsipāḷayam and Villianūr are the pioneering examples. Here there is a set of nine sages each seated on a mythical creature. The completeness of such a group in a Śaiva temple enable one to tentatively presume that these are meant to depict the *navanāthas*[58]. Therefore, before discussing about the Navanātha sculptures in other parts of south India, it is better to have a clear idea about the depictions of such sculptures at Ulsūr. Śrisailam and Hampi are two of the temple complexes of south India, where more representations of such Nātha-Siddhas on strange creatures are found in low – relief engravings besides the representations of the *yōgic* postures, ordinary Siddha Nāthas and other *tāntric* representations, which are stylistically datable to the early Vijayanagara art of south India.

In the Ulsūr Somēśvara temple, on the south wall of the *ardhamaṇḍapa*, there found depictions of the navanāthas in a variety of poses with huge coffiures, holding attributes such as *kamaṇḍala*, *danḍa* (staff) and so on. From east to west the nine sculptures of the Nāthas appear in the following order: seated respectively on a Tortoise, *Vyāli*, Lion, Fish, Scorpion, Snake, Antelope, Boar and Tiger. Verghese states that, "*since they are seated on extraordinary vāhaṉas such as bear, lion, snake, scorpion, tortoise, fish and other mythical animals, one can presume that these reliefs are representations of some semi-deified saints and not of living human beings"*[59].

In the first representation of these reliefs (Fig.14), a Nātha is shown seated on a on a tortoise (*Kūrmanātha*). His right leg is folded resting on the tortoise. His right

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[57] T. Koteswara Rao, *Op.cit*, p. 35, see also N. Chandramouli, *Op.cit*, 2002.

[58] Anila Verghese, 'A Rare Depcition of Nine Yogis in the Somesvara Temple, Ulsoor', in *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bombay*, Mumbai, Vol. 75, 2001, p. 186.

[59] *Ibid*,. pp. 179-180.

hand is resting on his right leg. He is folded and resting his left hand on his left leg knee. He is shown with rings on his both wrists, cross bands on his chest, wearing a loin cloth (*laṅgōti*) and *kuṇdalas* on his ears. The second representation is of the Nātha on a mythical animal *Vyāli* having elephant trunk, and lion's body. *Vyāli* is in a striding posture as its' trunk is shown lifted upwards. His right is folded and right hand is resting on it. His left hand is resting on the left knee. He is wearing big *kuṇdalas* on both the ears and cross bands on his chest. Bangle like ring is also visible on his hands. His head is slightly raised as if he is looking upwards (Fig.15). The third Nātha in this series is seated on a striding lion. His head is slightly tilted upward. He is wearing *kuṇḍalas* on both the ears, cross band on his chest, rings on his arms and wrists. He is wearing a *laṅgōti*. His right hand is resting on his right leg and his left leg is resting on his left knee. An anklet is also shown on his right leg (Fig.16). Next in the order is the legendary Mīṉanātha. He is depicted seated on fish as his right hand is resting on his right knee. His left hand is resting on the fish. He is wearing bangle like rings in his both arms and wrists, a thick necklace like ornament, a *yōga-daṇda* is placed behind his right hand, a round wallet is tied on slightly below his left shoulder; he is having the matted hair and wearing big *kuṇdalas* on his ears. His head is slightly tilted upwards as he is facing his right side. The fish is also clearly depicted in an artistic manner (Fig.17). Next to him is a Nātha seated on a scorpion[60] (Bhairava Nātha). He is wearing the *kuṇdalas*, cross band on his chest, along with a medallion in it. Rings in his arm and wrists; a *laṅgōti*, with his right hand he is holding a deer horn in his mouth. His left hand is resting on his folded left knee. Right leg leg is folded down and resting on the scorpion. A round wallet is shown on his left shoulder. A trident (*triśūla*) with a long shaft is shown behind the left shoulder (Fig.18). The next one is seated in a relaxed posture on a coiled cobra with unfurled hood (*Nāga Nātha*). The ascetic wears a thick necklace from which hangs a fairly large object, probably the deer horn. A round wallet is attached to his left shoulder. Large earrings, suspended from his elongated ears, rest on his shoulders (Fig.19). The next is

[60] In any of the lists of Navanāthas, do we come across a name Bhairavanātha. The Nātha seated on a scorpion is identified as Bhairavanātha on the basis of the representations of scorpion as the *lānchana* of Bhairava in one of the Bhairava sculptures at the Śrisailam (see Fig. 57). However, there is a description of one Vairavanātha in the list of Siddhas of Tamiḻ tradition. Scorpion under feet of the Bhairava is also found in a dilapidated sculpture at Mūlanātha temple in Bāhūr. Similar representations of Bhairavanātha are fund at Viriñjipuram, Jalakaṇṭēśvarā temple at Vēllore, Villianūr, Nandi, Ulsūr, Kalāsipālayam, Hampi and in few other temples.

Chauraṅginātha[61] seated comfortably, by hanging his legs freely on the caparisoned deer as if riding it by holding the bridle/reins in his left hand which is tied to its mouth. A wallet is tied to his left arm, and bangle like rings are found on his both wrists and arms, big *kuṇḍalas* on his ears, and necklace like ornament are clearly visible. His hair is piled in a knot on the top of his head. Interestingly, he is depicted as holding the deer horn in his right hand as he is producing the *Siṅganātha* –'a roar of a lion' (Fig.20). Next is the Nātha seated on a boar. His head is tilted slightly upward, and he is wearing the *kuṇḍalas* on his ears, cross bands on his chest with a medallion and bangle like rings on his both arms and wrist. His right hand is resting on his right leg and left hand in *lōla-hasta* posture, resting on the left knee (Fig.21). The last *yōgi* is Gōrakṣanātha seated on a tiger. His head is tilted downward and resting on his hands which are resting on his folded right knee. His left leg is folded and resting on the tiger. He is wearing the *kuṇḍalas* and rings on his wrists. A round wallet is also visible on his left arm (Fig.22). Anila Verghese[62] in one of her papers gives a different description of the Nātha Siddha representations of this temple, some of which are wrongly identified. For example, she identified one ascetic on a *makara* (crocodile), while there is no such representation.From the extraordinary nature of the *vāhaṉas*; it is obvious that these sculptures could not portray living ascetics. The *rudrākśā* beads and disheveled hair, that adorn some of these strange yōgis and the trident found with some of them, reveal the Śaiva nature of these ascetics.

The presence of these nine sages as a group at Ulsūr and Kalāsipāḷayam temples in the post-Vijayanagara art is an extremely rare occurrence. No such full group is found either at Śrisailam or in Hampi or in any other temple in south India. In the examples of Śrisailam, Āndhra Pradesh, in one panel, Mīṉanātha, Gōrakṣanātha and Chauraṅginātha are shown on their respective vehicles (see Fig.1). On another panel, Mīṉanātha and Bhairavanātha are shown facing each other on their respective vehicles. From its appearance it looks as if they are involved in a religious debate (see Fig.2). In another panel, Mīṉanātha is shown as if observing the meditation of his disciple Gōrakṣanātha, who is shown in a meditative posture, placing both his hands

[61] This Nātha seated on an antelope is identified as Chauraṅgi, also known as Kānu-pa or Kṛiśṇapāda deer/Antelope in Śanskrit language is called '*Kṛiśṇamriga*', and he is riding that animal.

[62] Anila Verghese, *Op.cit*, 2001, pp. 180-184.

on the *Yōgadaṇda* over which his head is shown resting. He is depicted sitting on tiger skin (see Fig.23).

With this identification of the list of Navanāthas in the sculptural art of the Sōmēśvara temple, Karnātaka, in the following pages we will discuss, individually, the representations of the Nātha Siddhas along with their historical background, in the sculptural art of the south Indian temples belonging to the Vijayanagar and post-Vijayanagara periods.

1. *Matśyēndranātha* or *Mīṉanātha*

Matśyēndranātha is believed to have lived in 9th - 10th centuries C.E. According to legends, he is the first incarnāte teacher of the *Nātha yōgi* movement and the reputed founder of the *Haṭha yōga* system, along with his disciple Gōrakṣanātha. He composed an important *Tāntric* work *Kaulajnanirnaya*, and also found one of the *Kaula* schools called *Yōgini-Kaula*[63]. According to *Skanda Purāna*, Matśyēndranātha was born as Lokēśvarā on an inauspicious day, so his family threw him into the sea, where he was swallowed by a fish and overheard the secret, conversation about *yōga* between Śiva and Pārvati, on the shore of an island. Pārvati had fallen asleep but Lokēśvarā heard everything. In this version of the legend, Śiva is pleased and, as Lokēśvarā comes out of the fish, he gives him the name Matśyēndranātha, Lord of the Fishes[64].

Later versions of the legend say that Pārvati became angry with Lokēśvarā and banished him to Kadali, the Kingdom of Women, to forget the secrets of *yōga*. *'The symbolism of the Matśyēndranātha legend involves the transmission or revelation of the yōga doctrine, and the increasing importance of haṭha yōga, associated with Gōrakṣanātha and the decline of earlier erotico-mystical practices symbolized by Kadali, the Kingdom of Women'*[65]. At Kadali, he was rescued by his disciple, Gōrakṣanātha, disguised first as a dancing girl and then as a bee.

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63 N.N. Bhattacharyya, *op.cit*., p. 78

64 This story is carved on a panel of the *prakāra* wall of the Śrisailam temple in Āndhra Pradesh, with Lokēśvarā partly emerging from the mouth of a great fish. In the adjacent panel, Śiva is pointing at this fish, which has now completely swallowed Lōkēśvarā, showing Pārvati where the listener is hidden.

65 Richard Shaw, *Op.cit*, p. 241

The sculptural representations of Matśyēndranātha or Mīṉanātha are the most numerous among the Nava Nātha representations of the Vijayanagara art. Mīṉanātha is found on the bottom of the north wall of the southern *gōpura* entrance of the Tirukāmēśvara temple at Villianūr of Puduchērry. In this Mīṉanātha is seated on a fish, his left leg is hanging on the fish and his right leg is folded upward and resting firmly on the body of the fish. Over his bent left leg his right hand is resting in a *lōla-hasta* pose. His left hand is resting on the fish. His hair is matted and long ears are visible. In his chest, he is wearing the deer horn as a medallion (Fig.24). On more than seven occasions, Mīṉanātha is represented on the pillared *maṇḍapas* and gōpuras of Tirukāmēśvara temple, Villianūr. Similar sculptures of Matśyēndranātha are frequently found in the pillar relief and *gōpura* walls of Villianūr Tirukāmēśvara temple and almost in all Śaivite temples of South India and to some extent in the Vaiṣṇava temples also.

One interesting sculpture of Matśyēndranātha or Mīṉanātha is found in the *arthamaṇdapa* pillar of the Mūlanātha temple of Bāhūr in Puduchērry. It is carved as a mid-relief carving facing north. He is depicted seated on a fish with a matted and disheveled hair in the form of flaring fire. Around his neck he is wearing *rudrakśamāla*, a ring in his wrist and arms; in left hand is resting on the fish, and he is holding a stringed musical instrument which looks like *ēktāra vīna*[66] (Fig.26). In the Paṭṭināthar temple at Paṭṭīsvaram, also Mīṉanātha is shown holding similar musical instrument. But in this example he is very crudely depicted (Fig.29). In one of the examples of the Tirukāmēśvara temple, Villianūr, Mīṉanātha is shown in a beautiful standing dancing posture of *dvibhaṅga mudrā* (Fig.44). Similar dancing posture of Mīṉanātha is also found in the Śiva temple of Lēpākśi in Anantapur district of Āndhra Pradesh.

In many of the sculptural examples he is shown in *Yōgic* postures. For example at Nandi Beta in Chickballapur district of Karnātaka, he is depicted seated on a fish and performing a complex *Yōgāsana* known as *Ēkapāda Sirsāsana* in which balancing on both of his hands, he is shown holding his right leg on the neck behind

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[66] G.W.Briggs records the ecstatic power of melodious music *'kiñjuri'* which also the name of the musical instrument played by the Nātha panthis. The same is noticed in the hands of Kabir, Mīṉanātha an even the poets of the *Dasa* tradition of peninsular India.

the head (Fig.28). Exactly similar *yōgāsana* is shown in the Kōtē Veṅkatēśvara temple, Bangalore in which also Mīṉanātha is shown in that complex *Yōgāsana* called *Ēkapāda Sirsāsana* (Fig.36).

On one of the pillars of a *maṇdapa*, at upper Ahobilam, Kurnūl district, Āndhra Pradesh, Mīṉanātha is shown in a preaching posture. Here he is shown as explaining something where his right palm is shown close to his mouth (Fig.38).

In one of the exquisite examples, perhaps the most beautiful of all the Mīṉanātha representations of the *Yōgic* posture in the sculptures of Upper Ahobilam, he is shown seated in a beautiful *dvibhaṅga* posture, holding his outstretched right hand on the *yōgadaṇda*, and placing the outstretched left hand on the bent left knee which is held in that bent posture with the help of *Yōgapaṭṭa*. The scales on the body of the fish are also beautifully rendered. At the shoulder level, the characteristic wallet is also designed in a beautiful shape. The head dress is also unique consisting of the garland of *rudrākṣa* beads and over it a spiked *kiritamakuta*.The ear rings are also characteristic of the Nātha Siddha forms (Fig.40).

A unique example of the Mīṉanātha representations, in the Paṭṭināthar temple of Paṭṭīsvaram in Tamiḻnādu, He is shown in a seated posture on the fish holding a flywhisk (*chāmara*) in his right hand[67]. This could be one of the *lānchanās* of Mīṉanātha, which was not shown in any other temple (Fig.30). Similarly, the example from the Vishnu temple at Tirukkuṙṅkudi in Tirunelvēli district of Tamiḻnādu shows Him seated on a huge fish with the head of a crocodile. He is sailing on the fish in a *yōgic* posture of *arthaparyaṅkāsana*, held tightly with the help of *yōgapatta*. Behind him is shown a boat showing two sailors and the captain with the saddle. The head dress in the form of sundisk (halo) and the big *kuṇḍalas* are the finest examples of this category (Fig.25).

On the *prakāra* wall of Śri Mallikārjuna temple at Śrisailam, Āndhra Pradesh, in the pillared *maṇdapa* of Halsūṟ Somēśwara temple, Jalakantēśwara temple at Kalāsipāḷayam near Bangalore, the sculptures of Matśyēndranātha are artistically depicted. Particularly at Śrisailam, Matśyēndranātha is depicted with *jatamaṇdala*,

[67] G.W.Briggs speaks about the use of a peacock feathered fan by the Nāthapanthis of Benaras region., see Briggs, *Op.cit*.p.23.

flaming hair encircling the head like rays of the Sun, which is the most characteristic hairstyle of the Siddhas and echoes a style of hairdo worn by Śiva (Figs.1, 2, 23&24). The Matśyēndranātha has his right hand resting on the tail of the fish. On the pillar of the *maharaṅgamaṇdapa* in the Virupākśa Temple at Hampi, he is elaborately decorated and rather stylized but the essential Siddha iconography is clearly found with flaming hair, giant round earrings, waistband, necklaces, armlets, and *yōgadaṇda*[68].

In some of the temples of Central, Coastal and South Tamiḻnādu viz., Trichy, Pērambalūr, Thūthukudi etc., Mīṉanātha sculptures are worshipped as *Kubērā*, the Lord of the Wealth. At Cheṭṭikuḷam Muruga̱n temple, which is located at a distance of eight kilometres from Ālathūr Gate, in the Pērambalūr District of Tamiḻnādu, there is a separate shrine for Kubērā with his wife Chitralekha. On one of the pillars of this temple, there are 12 sculptures of Mīṉanātha, which are here worshipped by the local people today as Kubērā. Each sculpture is assigned one zodiac sign. Particularly, one such sculpture of Mīṉanātha worshipped here as the Kubērā of *Viruchika Rāsi* (Scorpion Sign).

In the post –Vijayanagara period, commonly known as the Nāyaka period, the Nātha Siddha representations become gigantic in size and get transfereed from the medium of stone to that of the stucco sculpting.In the stone medium, the low-relief engravings are dimunitive in size ranging between 20 -30 cms.When they are represented in the medium of stucco the size increase varying between 90 -100 cms. Another interesting feature of the stucco forms of the Nātha Siddhas is that only four Nāthas are represented: Mīṉanātha, Ṛṣabhanātha and Gōrakṣanātha and Varāhanātha. Besides these many stucco images portray *tāntric* elements such as sexual scenes and *Bhairavicakra*. Even these late forms of Nātha representations in stucco, the artists are careful in portraying all the characteristic appendages of the Nātha Siddhas and associated *tāntric* representations, exactly in the same manner as they are found in the miniature low-relief stone sculptures.

Scenes of interesting sculpture of Mīṉanātha in stucco form are found in the north-east corner of the second *gōpura* of Sri Bhaktavatchala Perumal Temple at

[68] Richard Shaw, *Op.cit*, p. 242

Tirukaṇṇamaṅgai in Nāgapaṭṭiṇ am District. In this sculpture, Mīṉanātha is depicted seated in yogic posture (*lalitasana*) on a fish and holding with his left hand the breast of a semi-nude woman standing beside him. The woman is shown holding or pulling the hair of Mīṉanātha. This may be a depiction of a legend which says that Pārvati became angry with Lokēśvarā and banished him to Kadali, the Kingdom of Women, to forget the secrets of *yōga*. Here, he was rescued by his disciple, Gōrakṣanātha, disguised first as a dancing girl and then as a bee. The symbolism of the Matśyēndranātha legend increases importance of *haṭha yōga* and other *yōga* doctrines, associated with Gōrakṣanātha and the decline of earlier erotico-mystical practices symbolized by Kadali, the Kingdom of Women'[69]. Though the concept behind this sculpture remain obscure, it is right to point out here the words of Śivavākkiyar, even when a Siddha is enjoying the breasts of a woman, because of his disinterested attitude, he cuts away the knots of *karma* and becomes one who does not suffer rebirth[70]. At the same time in another sculpture, located to the right of the above sculpture, a man is depicted pulling out the snake from the secret part of a woman.The nude woman is also holding the hair of the man with one hand and the tail of the snake with the other. 'Serpent stands for the cycle of years or the cycle of births'[71]. As snake is also considered as a symbol of rebirth, the depiction may portray as the man or the Siddha is cutting off the rebirth.

Many such stucco sculptures were frequently found on the *prakāra* wall, *gōpura dwāra* and pillar reliefs of the Tirukamēśwara temple at Villianūr, and at the outer wall of sanctum of Naraśimha temple at Siṅgarigudi. Besides, various *yōgic* postures of different ascetics are also depicted in *kudu* and *vyālavari* of the Madagadipaṭṭu, Tiruvaṇdārkōil and almost in all Śaivite temples of South India.

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[69]Richard Shaw, 'Shaivite Ascetic Iconography: Important Associations between Srisailam, Hampi-Vijayanagara and Sringeri', in Anila Verghese and Anna L.Dallapiccola (ed), *South India Under Vijayana gara: Art and Archeology*, OUP, New Delhi, 2011, p. 241

[70] T.N. Ganapathy, *The Philosophy of the Tamil Siddhas*, ICPR, New Delhi, 2004 (2nd Ed.), p.20; Śivavākkiyar Songs, No. 118, 177 in Tha. Kovendhan (ed.), *Siddhar Pātalkaḷ*, Poombukar Pathipakam, Chennai, 1976, pp. 26, 35 respectively

[71] T.N. Ganapathy, *Op.cit*, p.22

2. Gōrakṣanātha

Gōrakṣa literally means protector of herd. He has the distinction of founding the largest sect of *yōgins* in India. The followers of Gōrakṣa are popularly known as *nāths*, *yōgis* (*jōgis*), *Gōrakhnāthis* and *Kānphaṭas*. They are very familiar for their large ear-rings, usually of bone, that give them the name 'Split ears' (*Kānphaṭa*)[72].

Gōrakṣanātha is considered to be the second *guru* of the Nātha *yōga* cult. He is described as *Paramahamsa*[73]. The invention of the *Haṭha yōga* system is ascribed to him and he is also credited with the foundation of the *Kānphaṭa* order of *yōgis*, known as Gōrakṣanāthis[74]. Gōrakṣanātha is considered to be the first disciple of Matśyēndranātha. It is also said that Matśyēndranātha gave birth to Gōrakṣanātha[75]. In the north Indian tradition Gōrakṣa was a fisherman by caste, while in the Bengal tradition he was a cowherd. The *Tāntric* text '*Gōrakṣa-samhita*' is associated with his name, and '*Gōrakṣa-pantha*' in north India is regarded as an esoteric system connected with *Tantra* and *yōga*[76]. *Gōrakṣagīta, Gōrakṣa Paddhāti* and *Siddha Siddhānta Paddhāti* are some of the literary compositions believed to have been written by Gōrakṣanātha. Possibly he belongs to 12th or 13th century[77]. It is believed that *Gōrakṣa Nātha* was instrumental in the codification of the *Nātha panth* by bringing together 12 separate sects (*Barah panthi*) in various parts of the country.

All that we knew about Gōrakṣanātha is distorted with enormous magical folklore and sectarian mythology across the sub-continent from Nepal to Rājasthan, from Punjab to Bengal, from Sindh to the Deccan into the interior south. He is credited with the authorship of a treatise long became extreme entitles *haṭha-yōga* and a surviving *Gōrakṣa śataka*. A commentary on *Gōrakṣa śataka* entitled *Gōrakṣa*

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72 Abhaya Datta, Keith Dowman and Hugh R. Downs, *Masters of Mahamudra: Songs and Histories of the Eighty Four Buddhist Siddhas*, 1985, p.84

73 G.W.Briggs, *Op.cit.,*p.200

74 N.N. Bhattacharyya, *op.cit*., pp. 284-286

75 Uma Sampath, *Sithaṭhamellam Sivamayam* (Tamil), Varam Pvt. Ltd, Chennai, 2006, p. 108

76 N.N. Bhattacharyya, *op.cit*., p. 286

77 There are some controversy regarding the period of Matśyēndra and Gōrakṣa, who are contemporaries according to legends, but their periods are mentioned differently.

Paddhati the word *haṭha* by *ha*=sun and *ṭha*=moon; the union of moon and sun forming *yōga*. (*haṭhau*=sūrya-chandrau=prāṇāpanau) [78]

More interestingly, Gōrakṣanātha is also recognized by the Kāpālikas as one of their founders, and it is a theory worth considering that Gōrakṣanātha was the reformer of the Kāpālikas, who then became the nāthas. The Kāpālikas had their origins back in the 4th century, and still practiced low-level *Śakta-tantra*. Gōrakṣanātha was taught by both Mīṉanātha and Jālandhara, and his disciples were Vairāginātha and other nāthas. It is difficult to be more precise as to Gōrakṣanātha's dates than to say that he lived in the 10th century[79]. His work on *Haṭha yōga* is called *Gōrakṣa-sataka*[80].

From Nepāl comes the popular legend that Śiva after he had recited the *Yōga* doctrine to Pārvatī, standing on the sea shore, while Matśyēndra (in the form of a fish) was listening, gave something to a woman to eat, with a promise that she would obtain a son. The woman did not eat the substance, but cast it upon a dung-hill. Twelve years later, Matśyēndra passed by the same spot and asked to see the child. He heard what the woman had done and asked her to search in the dung heap. She there discovered a boy of twelve years. That boy was named Gōrakhnāth. Matśyēndranāth became his spiritual master and he served as a dutiful disciple[81].

By his perfection in *yōgic* practices, Gōrakṣanātha was supposed to have attained superhuman powers. He turned the water of a well into gold and then into crystal. He created a sword which can break even the toughest rocks. He exercised absolute control over the nature also. When he enterd a garden in Punjab along with his disciples, the entire garden became green and all the driedup lakes gets filledup

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[78] Another text, the *Haṭyōga Pradīpika* by Svatmarāma Svāmi uses and reproduces a number of stanzas from *Gōrakṣa Sataka* in which the utility of *āsanas*, methods of purifications and the significance of practice are highlighted with the repeated assurances that they will ensure destruction of oldage and death and conquers death (*mṛtyum jayati*) illustrate the real meaning and final orientation of all these tecniques. See Micrea Eliade, *Op.cit.*, pp. 228-230

[79] Abhaya Datta, Keith Dowman and Hugh R. Downs, *Masters of Mahamudra: Songs and Histories of the Eighty Four Buddhist Siddhas*, 1985, pp.84-85

[80] Karel Warner, *A Popular Dictionary of Hinduism*, Curzon Press, U.K., 1994, p. 71. G.W.Briggs, gives the complete text and translation of the *Gorakṣa Sataka.op.cit.*pp.284-304.

[81] G.W.Briggs, *Op.cit*, p. 182. The same legend is also found in the Tamiḻ literary tradition and quoted by many authors on Siddha literature. See Ganamanjari Sampathkumar, *Sivamayam Kanda Siddhargal*, Sri Indhu Publications, Chennai, 2008.

with water. He can leave his physical body in a sleeping posture and travel into the nether world to interact with *Vāsukī*, the lord of snakes. An interesting aspect of his control over serpents is found in the legends which relate Gōrakṣanātha with serpent powers and functions[82].

Gōrakṣanātha is having a unique magic bag, or wallet of wonderful potency, from which he used to draw various kinds of gifts such as barley grains, rice, apples, grapes, flowers, or sacred ashes (*vibhūti*) which beget male children to the devotees. With his magic sandals he can go to any place of his choice at the flick of the eye lid. He also has a magic carpet or mat which informs Gōrakṣanātha about the problems faced by his devotees[83]. He is glorified as the reformer of the *Nātha panth* from the *Kaulācāra* into an orthodox, organized and canonized pantheon.

According to one legend popular in the Tami̲l country, Gōrakṣanātha rescued his teacher Matśyēndranātha, who was engaged in a family life with Premala, Queen of Malayāladēśa. Further, he found the opium (*kañja*) by performing a *Yajna*, which later became known as '*Gōrakṣa Mūligai*' (Gōrakṣa Medicinal herb). About the attainment of his '*Siddhi*', there exist several stories, according to one legend he attained his *siddhi* at Pa̲la̲ni (Dindigul District) and according to another legend, he attained his *Siddhi* at Pōrūr in Tami̲lnādu. Then it is also believed that he attained his *samādhi* at Vadakku Poigai Nallūr near Vēḷḷāṅkaṉṉi, where a big temple is constructed on his *samādhi* shrine. Similarly, it is believed that, Gōrakṣa stayed at Kōrkādu village of Puduchērry, which still exists between the highway of Bāhūr and Villianūr. There he performed '*Tapas*' and attained '*Siddhi*'. Thus, the village is named after him as 'Kōrakar (Gōrakhar) Kādu' and later come to the current corrupted form 'Kōrkādu'[84]. Even today, at Kōrkādu there exists a temple dedicated to him and every year *Gurupūjā* being conducted to him by his devotees in a grand manner.

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[82] See Briggs, *Op.cit,* pp.186-196.

[83] *Ibid*, pp.199-200.

[84] Uma Sampath, *op.cit*., p. 106-7

In the sculptural form this Nātha is depicted as seated on a tiger or tiger skin[85]. In one of the panels on the *prakāra* wall of the Śrisailam temple, Gōrakṣanātha is shown seated on a tiger along with the appendages like big *kuṇdala*, cross bands and medallion, *rudrākṣamāla* in his chest, rings in his arms and wrists, matted hair, etc., his right hand is resting on his right leg knee in a *daṇda-hasta mudrā* and his left hand and left leg is resting on the back of the tiger. In opposite to Gōrakṣa, a Siddha is seated on a *yōga-daṇda* in a *padmāsana* with his both hands are resting on his respective thighs. He is also wearing the appendages like the Gōrakṣa as said above; under him a *kamaṇḍala* is placed. Their background resembles that they are meditating in the forest (Fig.46).

In the Bhōganandīśvara temple at Nandi, Chickballapur district, a sculpture of Gōrakṣanātha is found in the *mukhamaṇdapa* pillar. In this He is seated on a tiger in *ardha padmāsana*. His right hand is resting on the right leg knee in a *katya valambita mudrā* and the left hand and left leg on the tiger's back in a *daṇda hasta mudrā*. He is wearing *kuṇdala*, rings in arms and wrists, anklets in his legs, etc (Fig.47).

Another sculpture of Gōrakṣanātha is found in the Tirukāmēśvarar temple, Villianūr, on the lower portion of the *Gōpura*, just above the Mīṉanātha sculpture (see Fig.24). He is seated on a striding tiger. He is also wearing *yōga-paṭṭa* in his left leg and other similar appendages such as the horn, as in the case of Mīṉanātha. His left hand is resting on the left leg knee and his right hand is resting on his right thigh in a *katya valambita mudrā*. His hair do is similar to that of Mīṉanātha (Fig.49).

In the Rāmaliṅgēśvara temple at Āvani in Karnātaka, many sculptures of Gōrakṣa are found on the *ardhamaṇdapa* pillars. One of them show Gōrakṣa seated on a tiger with his right leg hanging on the tiger and the left leg is folded and placed on the back of the tiger; his left hand is resting on his left knee in a *daṇda-hasta* pose. In his right hand, he is holding a fly whisk like ornament. The open mouth of the tiger seems to depict it as roaring (Fig.50).

[85] The motif of tiger is identified as the master of initiation in the Shamanic religions of Central Asia and Indonesia, where they are the vehicles to carry the neophyte into the jungle, where the jungle is the symbol of 'beyond'. Mircea Eliade, *Op.cit.,* p.306

In the Laxmi Narasimha temple at Lower Ahobilam, Kurnūl district, Āndhra Pradesh, Gōrakṣanātha is represented seated on a tiger, on the *adhistāna* panel of the *vāhana-maṇdapa*. There are long *kuṇdalas* on his ears and the medallion in his chest is clearly visible. He is seated on the tiger with his left hand resting on his left leg knee, and in the palm of his left hand he is resting his face; and his right hand is resting on his right thigh in *katya valambita mudrā* (Fig.51).

In a sculpture found on the pillar of the Nandi *maṇḍapa* of Tañjāvūr Brahadīśvara temple, Gōrakṣa is seated on a tiger in *lalitāsana*. He is wearing a *laṅgōti*, big *kuṇdalas*, medallion on his chest, rings in his arms and wrists; and anklet in his legs. His right hand is in *daṇda-hasta mudrā*, resting on his right leg knee and his left hand is resting on a *yōga-daṇda*, which is placed on his left leg thigh (Fig.52).

On the pillars of the Tirukaḻukuṉṟam Murugaṉ temple, located Chengulpet District contains numerous sculptures of Gōrakṣa in different iconographical styles. In this Gōrakṣa is seated on a tiger in *lalitāsana*. Unlike other sculptures, in this, tiger is facing left, while in all other sculptures it is shown turning right. His matted hair, *kuṇdala*, a deer horn as medallion, *yōga-patta* on his left leg as in Fig.49; a *laṅgōti*, anklets, a wallet on his shoulder are clearly depicted (Fig.54). In another sculpture of Gōrakṣa in the same temple shows Him seated on a tiger. His left hand is in *abhayamudrā* and his right hand is in *daṇda-hasta mudrā* resting on his right leg knee folded in a *rājalīlāsana*. His matted hair, *kuṇdala*, and ornaments in his neck are clearly depicted (Fig.55). Very frequently, along with the sculptures of Mīṉanātha; one can find the large number of sculptures of of Gōrakṣa in many temples of south India.

3. Chauraṅgi or Kānu-pā or Kriśṇapāda (Nātha on an Antelope)

Chandramouli states that *Nātha* seated on a deer can be identified as Chauraṅgi or Kānu-pā or Kṛśna pāda, because deer is also called as Kṛśna Mriga[86]. It is said that Chauraṅgi was one among the five original Nātha Siddhas, who born from the legs of the mutilated corpse of *Ādinātha* and later cohabited with his stepmother, because of his attraction towards women. The Tañjāvūr Catalogue states that Ācāryā

[86] For more details see G.D.K. Supriya, *Tantric Elements in the Art of Srisailam*, Andhra Pradesh, unpublished M.Phil Dissertation, Department of History, Pondicherry University, 2008, p.76

Chauraṅgi composed a *yōgic* work under the title *Vāyutaṭṭvopadēśa*[87]. It is also said that Chauraṅgi and Gōrakṣanātha are two important disciples of Matśyēndranātha; and also said he was one of the desciples of Jālandhara[88]. In the Sahajiya Buddhist saint Kāṇhapāda (Kṛṣṇapāda) calls himself a Kāpā lan[89].

A sculpture of Chauraṅginātha riding a deer is found as a mid-relief sculpture on one *mukhamaṇdapa* pillars of the Bhōganandīśvara temple at Nandi. His right hand is in *varada mudrā* and his left hand is holding the reins of the deer. Anklets on his legs; rings on his wrists, *kuṇdalas* on his ears and a wooden staff like object (*daṇda*) behind him are clearly found in this sculpture (Fig.56). The sculptures like Chauraṅginātha are also found on the *prākara* walls of Śrisailam Mallikārjuna temple, Āndhra Pradesh (see Fig.01) and in the Yōganandīśwara temple at Nandigrāma of Kōlār district in Karnātaka.

4. Bhairava Nātha (Nātha on a Scorpion)

The representations of an Nātha seated on scorpion are rare. Identifying this Nātha is difficult because he is not referred to in any of the literary works on the Nātha Siddhas. On the basis of the representation of a scorpion (as a *lānchana*) at the foot of a Bhairava sculpture on the *prakāra* wall of Śrisailam temple, Kurnūl district, Āndhra Pradesh, this Nātha seated on a scorpion is identified as Bhairavanātha. Scorpion is depicted as *kanṭhamāla* (neck ornament) on different forms of Siva such as Vīrabhadramūrti, AghōraŚiva, Aghōrastramūrti and Viśāpaharanāmūrti[90]. The scorpion is also a sexual symbol, as in a Khajurāho carving of a woman removing her clothes when she discovers a scorpion hidden there. At the temple of sixty four *yōginis* at Hirāpūr in Orissa, there is a carving of an *yōgini* dancing on a scorpion. In

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[87] N.N.Bhattacharyya, *Op.cit*.,pp. 285 and 79

[88] Abhaya Datta, Keith Dowman and Hugh R. Downs, *Masters of Mahamudra: Songs and Histories of the Eighty Four Buddhist Siddhas*, 1985, pp.79, 250

[89] From a historical point of view, Kaṇhas'mention of Kāpālika is the earliest reference to these ascetics in Bengal. His date is uncertain that probably flourished during 8th-12th centuries since Kāṇha is equated with Kṛṣṇapādā/Kāṇupā/Chouraṅgi must have lived after 10th century. David N. Lorenzen, Op.cit., pp.69-71

[90] Elements of Hindu Iconography, Vol.2, Part I, pp.179, 186, 198-99, 357-58, respectively

the Marathi tradition, there is a story of a Siddha named Khiluba, who is tested by the Goddess *Janai* and seven water goddesses by being placed on a mat of scorpions[91].

Bhairavanātha does not seem to be a popular one to be included in the list of *Navanāthas* of the Saivite tradition or of the eighty four siddhas of the Buddhist tradition. Only in the Eighteen Tami̱l Siddhar tradition[92] he is mentioned as '*vairavan*'. Interestngly, in the sculptural representations although few in number, he appears very prominently on equal terms as Mīṉanātha. At Śrisailam, he is shown seated on a scorpion and holds the tail of the scorpion with his left hand facing Mīṉanātha seated on a fish. Both of them are shown resting their right hands on *yōgadaṇda*. The symmetrical and iconographical association of the Matśyēndranātha and Bhairavanātha images at Śrisailam shows that he is equal in importance or may be a contemporary of Mīṉanātha. Bhairavanātha is included in the Navanātha representations of Jalakaṇtēśvara temple (Kalāsipāḷayam, near Bangalore town, Karnātaka) and also in the Sōmēśvara temple (Ulsūr near Bangalore town, Karnātaka: see Figs.11 &18). Individual or independent representations of Bhairavanātha are rare.

In a sculpture found on the *mukhamaṇdapa* pillar of the Ulsūr Sōmēśvara temple He is shown seated on a scorpion in a *padmāsana* pose. He is seated as folding his both legs together and his both hands are resting on his respective thighs. His matted hair, *kuṇḍalas* in ears, medallion on his chest is clearly depicted. The scales on the body of the scorpion are beautifully drawn (Fig.58).

Another sculpture of Bhairavanātha is found on the *vāhana maṇdapa* pillars of Lower Ahobalam temple, Kurnūl district, Āndhra Pradesh. He is depicted as typically seated on a scorpion in *lalitāsana*, his right leg bent upward on which his right hand resting and his right leg is left free. His *kuṇdala* on the ears, big medallion on chest, *laṅgōti* under the waist level are clearly depicted. He is shown with a crowned head (Fig.59).

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91 *Ibid*, pp. 242-243

92 The name is found in the '*Siddha Vaitya'* books as it is refered in his work in Tami̱l by Ganamanjari Sampathkumar, *Op.cit*., See Appendix.No.

Bhairavanātha is also found in the sculptural art at Hampi and at Śriṅgēri, and in both places, there are only two solitary examples. In the Tiruvēṅgalanātha Temple at Hampi, Bhairavanātha is shown seated in *sukhāsana*, on a scorpion. He has tufted hair, double armlets on the wrists, and is playing a flute or horn. To his right is a tall crossed stand suspended from which is a round object, which may his wallet. In the Viḍyāśaṅkarā Temple at Śriṅgēri, there is a panel depicting Bhairavanātha in a meditational posture on a giant scorpion, Vyālinātha and an Nātha on a bear. At Hampi, Bhairavanātha is represented in one of the pillared *Maṇḍapas*. Interestingly on the Malyavanta hill there is a striking boulder carving of seated Bhairava with a scorpion at his feet.

5. Vyāli Nātha

The Vyālinātha is one among the Navanāthas. He is better known as Hādi-pā who wrote some treatises in Sanskrit on *Tāntric* cults, such as *Vajrayōginisādhanā, Suddhivajrapradīpa, Śricakra-sambara-garba-taṭṭva-vidhi* and *Humkāra-ciṭṭavindu-bhāvana karma*[93]. He is also known as Jalandranātha. Vyāli's name has many variants viz., Byāli, Bhāli, Byāri, Bāli, Pāli, Vyādi etc[94]. However, in the book '*Masters of Mahāmudra*', he is listed last of the 'Eighty-four *Mahāsiddhas*'. The work mentions that Vyāli was born in a wealthy Brahmin family, in the land of Apatra[95]. He attempted to prepare a recipe of immortality, but the potion had no effect. Therefore in anger he threw his alchemical manual into the River Ganges, during his 13th year of *Sādhana*. Then he became a wandering beggar. One day he met a courtesan on the banks of the river and narrated the incident. The courtesan gave him a book that she found in the river while bathing. On seeing that book Vyāli laughed and told her that it was the book that he threw in the river long ago. Later with the help of the courtesan, he again started his alchemical work and got success in preparing the immortal recipe. After partaking the potion, Vyāli and the courtesan attained the *siddhi* of deathlessness and settled in the land of Kilampara[96]. This legend also

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[93] N.N.Bhattacharyya, *Op.cit*., p.79.

[94] See David Gordon White, *The Alchemical Body*, Op.cit., p. 74

[95] Apatra may be a corruption of Aparantha, the ancient name of the western province of India. for more details see Abhaya Datta, et.al., *Op.cit.,* p. 382

[96] The Tibetans identify Kalimpara where Vyāli retreated with his elixir, with Adam's peak in Sri Lanka, see *Ibid*, p. 382.

associates Siddha Nāgārjuna, who met Vyāli to learn the secret of the immortality, by offering his magical shoe to the Vyāli. Then he returned to the Śriparvata and continued his practice for the sake of all beings. Soon after Vyāli returned to the world, he becomes the disciple of Siddha Carpati, after encountering him. Based on the above legend, Vyāli would have lived in the 10th century, since he was associated with Siddha Nāgārjuna and Siddha Carpati[97].

The sculptural representation of Vyālinātha is not so numerous in south India. Generally, Vyālinātha is shown seated on the mythical animal *Vyāli*[98]. His head is adorned with matted hair. The *kuṇdalas* (ear rings) on his ears are clearly visible. He is wearing a bangle like ring in his hands. His right hand is rested on the back of his vehicle *Vyāli* and his left hand is put down towards the opened mouth of his vehicle. His left leg is folded and its foot is resting on the body of his vehicle and his right leg is hanging down towards the ground. The *Vyāli* is depicted as in striding position which denotes that it is in movement and its tail is erect. Sometimes, the *Vyāli* is depicted as in striding position and its trunk rising upward, which denotes that it is in movement and its tail is erected towards the sky. Its mouth is left opened like yawning.

On the pillar of *ardhamaṇdapa* of Śri Mūlanātha Swāmy temple, Bāhūr, Puduchērry Vyālinātha seated on *Vyāli*, a mythical animal is found. His hairdo resembles the typical Chāḷukyan style. He is seated with his right hand in *katya valambita mudrā* resting on the tail/back of the *Vyāli* and his left hand on its head. Necklace like ornament on chest, big *kuṇdalas* on ears, rings on his wrists are clearly depicted. This *maṇdapa* dates back to the 9th-10th centuries. In all other later examples, the *Vyāli* is facing towards his right handside, but in this, the *Vyāli* is facing towards his left hand side (Fig.60).

Another sculpture of *Vyālinātha* is found in the *mukhamaṇdapa* pillar of the Sōmēśvara temple, Ulsūr, Karnātaka. In this he is depicted seated in *ardha-paryaṅkāsana* pose on a *Vyāli*. The *Vyāli* is facing to his right hand side and his right hand is probably placed on the *Vyāli's* mouth/trunk. His left hand is resting on his left

[97] Abhaya Datta, et.al., *Op.cit.*, p. 382

[98] *Vyāli* is a mythical animal with a combination of tiger or lion body, and elephant trunk or the face of a crocodile.

leg knee. The general appendages of the Nāthas such as the *yōgapatta*, horn, and disheveled hair and so on are also found on him (Fig.61).

In the *mukhamaṇdapa* pillar of the Bhōganandīśvara temple of Nandi, Karnātaka, Vyālinātha is shown seated on a striding *Vyāli* in an *ardha-matśyēndrāsana* pose. His left hand is folded and resting on the left leg knee, which is already folded upward and footed on *Vyāli*. His right hand is unfolded as he is showing his palm in a *hamsapakśa mudrā*. His head is slightly bent towards left. His matted hair, big *kuṇdalas*, deer horn as a medallion on his chest tied in a thick woollen like thread, rings in his arms and wrists are clearly depicted (Fig.62). Another sculpture of Vyālinātha is found on the wall of the Amman shrine (*Thāyār Sa̱ṉṉidhi*) of Śri Raṅganātha temple at Śriraṅgam which is almost similar to the one described above (Fig.63).

Two sculpture of Vyālinātha are found in two different parts of the *Gōpura* of Villianūr temple. The one on the southern wall of the southern *gōpura* show him with long matted locks of hair covering his ears. He is wearing a *laṅgōti* and cross belts on his chest. His right leg is hanging down and the left leg is folded upward and folded on the back of the *Vyāli*. He is holding a flag like attribute in his right hand and his left hand is resting on the left leg knee in a *lōla-hasta* pose. A wallet in his left arm is also visible (Fig.64).

The second one is found on the northern side of the southern *gōpura*, where the other sculptures of Navanāthas are also found in a single row from top to bottom. In this *Vyāli* is clearly depicted as it is fierce fully striding, by opening its mouth and showing its big teeth. He is seated on the *Vyāli* wearing *laṅgōti*, holding a fly whisk in his right hand and his left hand resting on the back of the *Vyāli* in a *katya valambita mudrā*. His matted hair, big ear rings, necklace like ornaments, medallion of deer horn, rings on his wrists, a wallet on his left shoulder are clearly depicted (Fig.65).

The sculptures of Vyālinātha are also found at Āvani, Ulsūr, Kalāsipāḷayam, etc. and other temples in Karnātaka, Śrisailam in Āndhra Pradesh.

6. Kūrma Nātha (Nātha on a Tortoise)

According to Gordon White[99], Kūrmanātha is one of the four *yuganāthas*, the Lords of the Ages (Khagēndranātha, Kūrmanātha, Mēṣanātha and Macchēndranātha) of the *Siddha Cakra* of earlier *Kaula* tradition. And these four are identified with the four cardinal directions on the inner square of the important *Kaula Siddha Cakra*. In one of the pillars of the *Kalyāna maṇdapa* of the Villianūr temple, Kūrmanātha is depicted seated on a tortoise. His head is adorned with matted hair and with the *karṇa kuṇdalas* (ear rings). He is wearing bangle like rings on his hands and a garland of beads across his chest. His left hand is holding the knee of the left leg and planted firmly on the tortoise and his right hand is rested on the thigh of his right leg with slight bend. Sculptures of this Kūrmanātha are also found in the temples at Ulsūr and Kalāsipāḷayam in Karnātaka. None of the literary works mention Kūrmanātha, nor is he found in the list of Navanāthas. Interestingly he appears in the list of Tamil̲ Siddars as *Kūrmamun̲i*[100]. However, in the Tamil̲ tradition, he is not given any specific place or credited with any literary or medicinal work.

7. Nāga Nātha (Nātha on a Snake)

Interestingly, snakes are also associated with the legendary accounts of Gōrakṣanātha. He was called as the incarnation of *Ādisēśa*, the primeval snake and the vehicle of Viṣṇu. He is also said to be proficient in snake taming and curing snake bites[101]. He is also said to have visited the Nāga kingdom. While describing about the divisions of the Order of the Nāthas, G.W. Briggs states that, Nāgnāth or Rāwal is the third of the original Śiva group. The *Rāwals* are the great wanderers, who are the most important of the *Musalmān yōgis*[102]. But Nāganātha is not included in the any of the list of Nātha order. Yet representations of a Nātha with all the characteristic appendages seated on the snake are depicted in the Navanātha sculptural panels of

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99 David Gordon White, *The Alchemical Body*, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1986 (rep.)., pp. 180 and 444 (n)

100 Kamil V. Zvelebil, *Lexicon of Tamil Literature*, E.J. Brill, Leiden, 1995, pp. 165-66.

101 See G.W. Briggs, *Op.cit.*172-173.

102 Kama, a village nearer to Dwārahāt is the seat of the *pir* of the Almora district. The temple, which is in the house of the *pir*, is dedicated to Nāgnāth. Besides, the Devi Pātan temple that situated on a small hill close to the town of Tulsipur, in the Balrāmpur State, nearer to the foothills of Himalayas and the borders of Nepal. The north-east corner is a spot sacred to Nāgnāth. see G.W. Briggs, *Op.cit.*,1938, 66, 81, and 93.

Kalāsipāḷayam and Ulsūr. Besides these he was also found in isolated context in many of the south Indian temples. Some of them are discussed below:

In the southern *gōpura* of Tirukāmēśvara temple, Villianūr, Puduchērry, the sculpture of Nāganātha is identified along with other Nāthas. He is seated on an elevated place and under his foot a snake is depicted with its raising hood. Almost all Nāthas who are placed in this row are shown with common appendages such as matted hair, big *kuṇdalas*, necklace like ornaments, deer horn medallion, rings on his wrists, *laṅgōti* etc. A *yōga-daṇda* is placed on a tail of the snake, on which Nāganātha resting his left hand and his right hand in *daṇda-hasta mudrā* is resting on his folded right knee (Fig.67). One sculpture of Nāganātha is found in the *mukhamaṇdapa* pillar of the Sōmēśvara temple at Ulsūr. He is seated in a *Pariaṅgāsana* pose on a folded snake which is raising its big hood. His folded left leg is resting on his right leg and his left hand is resting on the snake in a *katya valambita mudrā* and his right hand is on his left knee in a *lōla-hasta mudrā*. His *laṅgōti*, *kuṇdala*, matted hair, a wallet on his left shoulder and cross bands on his chest are clearly visible (Fig.68). Another sculpture is identified on the entrance pillar of the Jalakaṇtēśvara temple, Kalāsipāḷayam. Unlike other sculptures, in this, the nātha is holding the snake in his left hand in an *Upavēsāsana* (squatting position) instead of seated on it; and a wallet is hanging on his right hand. His matted hair, big *kuṇdala*, thick woollen cross bands are purposefully shown. He is holding his right hand in *chinmudrā* (Fig.69). Similarly with few changes in its style, same kinds of sculptures are also found in the temples at Śrisailam, Nandi, Ulsūr and Kalāsipāḷayam.

8. Varāha Nātha (Nātha on a Boar)

The name Varāhanātha is not included in any of the lists of Nātha Siddha However, at Kalāsipāḷayam and Ulsūr temples the Varāhanātha is one of the Navanāthas. Besides these two temples, Varāhanātha is depicted in some more teple sculptures. Except in a couple of cases in which he is shown seatd on the boar, all other exaples are in stnding posture particularly in *yōgic* posture.

In the sculpture identified on the *mukhamaṇdapa* pillar of the Bhōganandīśvara temple at Karnātaka, he is seated in a *lalitāsana* on a boar, similar to the Vyālinātha (Fig.62) found in the same temple. His right hand is in a *hamsapakśa*

mudrā and his left hand is in *daṇda-hasta mudrā*. A long cross band is shown on his left shoulder, a big medallion on his neck, *kuṇdalas* on his ears, rings on his wrists and arms, and anklets on his legs are clearly depicted and his knotted hairdo is different from all other hair styles (Fig.70). In another example of Varāhanātha from the same temple he is shown n a standing posture. In this sculpture Nātha is standing in a *Vrkśāsana* pose, by holding right toe on the earth and his folded left leg is resting on the right thigh. His both hands are raised above his head in *añjali mudrā*. He is having a long beard and long flowing locks of hair. A boar is depicted standing behind him (Fig.71). In this and all other sculptures in Tamiḻ region, Varāhanātha is depicted in *Vrkśāsana* pose and boar is depicted standing behind him (Figs. 71-82).

9. Nātha on a Lion

One of the *Nava Nāthas* is found seated on a striding lion. His head is adorned with matted hair. He is wearing the *kuṇdalas* (ear ring) on his ears; bangle like rings on his hands and a garland of beads (*rudrākshas*) that crossed around his chest. His left hand is rested on the knee of the left leg that rested and slightly rises upwards from the back of the lion and his right hand is rested on the thighs of his right leg with slight bend. The lion is depicted as in striding position which denotes that it is in movement and its tail is erected towards the sky. The name and legendary history of this Nātha on a lion is still obscure and so far there are no textual descriptions of any Nātha who can be identified as something to do with a lion. The image of this Nātha on a lion is rarely found in the temple sculptures except, Villianūr, Nandi, Ulsūr, Kalāsipāḷayam, Hampi and Śrisailam (Figs. 13, 16).

Depictions of the Siddhas in different *Yōgic* Postures

Besides the representations of the Nātha Siddhas in the Vijayanagara art, in the same context we have the occurrence of many low-relief sculptures which can be identidfied as those of *yōgic* exercises. They also occur in almost all the temples of south India. Unlike the Nātha Siddha representations, which display stylistic uniformity across the region, the representations of the yogic exercises display great thematic and stylistic divergence. As the Nātha Siddha philosophy also emphasise on *jīvanmukti* through the achievement of a *siddhadēha* with the help of *yōga*, a study of

these sculptural representations will help us in understanding the evolution of the sculptural manifestations.

Attainment of supernatural powers (*Siddhi/ṛddhi*) has been one of the goals of ancient Indian thinking that found expression in all the religious systems in their philosophy, literature and material/ritual context. Tradition speaks about Eight (*Aṣta*) *Siddhi*s[103], which are to be attained through *Yōga Sādhana* and the individual who attained them is called a *Siddhā* or *Siddhāchārya*. The *Tāntric Yōga* is to be decided by the *Ācharya* (*Guru*) depending on the receptibility and nature of the disciple[104].

Tāntric Yōga does not go against nature and on the contrary it follows the law of nature, which is by itself inclined to move towards self-realisation. The *Sādhaka* should have a positive attitude towards two things in life: 1) it means accepting worldly desires and objects of enjoyment (*Bhōga*) and treating them in such a way as to move towards sublimation, and 2) it means accepting that every thing in the world is divine. As such we are not supposed to kill our desires but to learn to transform or sublimate them. This is the reason why *Tantra* advocates the *Sādhana* of *kaula* or *Vāma mārga*[105]. The basic desires (sex desires) are accepted in the *Tāntric Sādhana* as currents of energy originating from one and the same basic source, *cit sakti* or *kuṇḍalini*. These vital and *pranic* currents are to be controlled and regulated so as to see their smooth flow through sublime channels and yield better results. *Siddha*s believe that the human body is the microcosm of the universe – mountain, sea, Moon, Sun and river – all that, which the world is composed of, are within the human body.

[103] *Siddhi*, attainable through *Sādhana*, may be of many kinds, e.g., *mantrasiddhi* (Success in *mantras*), *vāksiddhi* (success in speech). By the former, *mantra* is made of secure the desired result. By the latter, the speech becomes infallible. After reaching the peak of spiritual life, one can possess the eight *Siddhis*, viz., *anima* (power of assuming and atomic Figure), *mahima* (power of increasing one's size at will); *laghima* (assuming excessive lightness at will), *isitva* (acquiring superiority over others), *vaistva* (subduing all to one's will), *prapti* (obtaining anything at will), *prakāmya* (irresistible will), *kāmavasayita* (suppression of passion and desire).

[104] *Tantras* classified the human beings on the basis of the mental qualities into three groups. 1. *Divyabhava*, 2. *Vīrabhava* and 3. *Paśubhava*. Accordingly separate *Tāntric* methods are prescribed by the teacher to each of these categories. The *Vāmācāra tantras* which prescribed the usage of *Pañcatattvas* allowed only the *Vīrabhava* class to adopt them. For the *Paśubhava*, the mantras are prescribed and for the *Divyabhavas* the *mudrās*. Similarly, recitation of *mantras* inwardly and outwardly is also ordained.

[105] The extreme form of the *tantras* are called as *Vāma tantra* or *Kaula tantras* which emphasis the enjoinment of all worldly pleasures including sex which is also given the status of *yōgic Sādhana*. For this purpose, the physical body is to be kept strong and virile for the purpose of which certain mercurial drugs are prescribed. For the *Kaula sādhaka* mercury is Śiva *Bīja* as the human semen, which is to be preserved for making the body ageless. In Buddhism, the same is called *Vajra*.

It is through *yōgic* practices that one should strive and achieve total control over the senses of the body and mind. For that a physically strong body is a must and for *Kāya-sādhana*[106]. Besides *yōgic* practices, the *Siddhas* also insist on using mercurial drugs for making the body strong and indestructible which is called the *Rasavada* and such *Siddha*s are called *Rasēśvara Siddha*s or *Rasēśvaras*[107].

The *Siddhas* are the followers of the *yōgic* path of living to attain the '*Aṣta Siddhi*s'. The *yōgic* practices through which the *Kuṇḍalini Śakti* is to be aroused and moved upwards to reach the *Sahasrāra* is the ultimate goal of the *yōgic* exercises. The continuity of the *prakriti* with *puruṣa* makes the *sādhaka* and '*paramahamsa*' which is what the ultimate aim of a *tāntric* practitioner. The ascent of the *Kuṇḍalini śakti* through various *cakras* or *padmas* in various parts or the body is to be achieved in the '*Siddha Sādhana*'.

The Sculptural Representations

The sculptural art of Śrisailam temple in Āndhra Pradesh is replete with the representations of the *Aṣtadala padma*. *Dasadala padma*, *dwadasadala padma* and so on denoting different nerve-plexuses within the body such as *Mūlādhara, Svadhistāna, Maṇipura, Anāhata, Viśuddha*,and *Ājña;* each of them is visualized as a *cakra* or *padma* with several angles or petals. As many as 150 representations of the *yōgic cakra*s are found at Śrisailam. Some of them are depicted in association with *Siddhas* and sometimes with Swan (*Hamsa*). In addition to these several sculptures depict *yōgic* exercises and postures. All these indicate the popularity of *Siddha* cult in the sacred complex of Śrisailam. The symbolic representation of the '*Hamsa*' beside the *Siddha*s in *yōgic* postures indicates their status as that of a *paramahamsa*. Śrisailam has important association with the traditions common to Śaivite and

[106] The fundamental difference between Brahminical ideology and *Tāntric* practice is that while the former prescribes severe physical suffering for the attainment of *mokśa*, the latter recommends the stage of *jīvan mukta* in one's own life span through the knowledge of the unity of the male - female elements which is the ultimate *siddhi* of the body (*Kāya*) within and without.

[107] One aspect of the *Nātha Siddha* cult is the usage of mercurial drugs for making the body ageless and also for the manufacture of gold from the base metals. One of the *Nātha Siddhas*, the *Siddha* Nāgārjuna and his disciple Atreya is stated to have established a chemical laboratory at Srisailam and made efforts to change the entire hill Sriparvata into gold. Besides Śrisailam, Ālampuram, Siddhavatam and Tripurāntakam are said to be the centers of *Rasavidya* during medieval times. The Tamil *siddhas* are also referred to as experts in alchemy and all these are called as *Rasasiddhas* or *Rasēśvaras*. (P.V.P. Sastry, 2005, pp. 30-35; P. Hymavathy, 2006 & 2008; N.N. Bhatacharayya, 1992, pp.22-24).

Buddhist *tantra*. On the Buddhist side, Śrisailam appears to be the Śriparvata mentioned in many Tibetan texts, where the Siddha Nāgārjuna did alchemical experiments.

One of the examples of *yōgic* exercises is found on the *prakāra* wall of Śrisailam temple. A Siddha is seated on a long *yōga-daṇda* in a *padmāsana* pose and his head and body are fully bent towards his right side. His both hands are raised and joined together in *añjali mudrā*. His matted hair and big *kuṇdala*, are clearly visible. Besides, a tree and under him, two monkeys are shown to depict the forest scenery (Fig.91). Similar representations are also found in association with the Nātha Siddha representations (Fig.23).

According to the ancient tradition, ascetics who strive to gain liberation are classified into four classes. They are *kutīcakas*, *bahūdakas*, *hamsas* and *paramahamsas*. Of these, the last represents an extremely ancient ascetic order. The *paramahamsas* live under trees, in grave yards or in deserted houses. They go naked or half-clad. They are indifferent to everything in the sense that they are disinterested, free souls. They look at a clod of mud and gold with the same dispassion. They accept food from people of any caste. They practice a kind of *yōgic tāntrism*. Gōrakṣanātha is described as *Paramahamsa*[108].The Siddhas of Tamiḻnādu come very close to the *Paramahamsas*[109].

On a pillar near the Bhairavanātha in the Tiruvēṅgalanātha Temple at Hampi is a fine image of a, long-haired *yōgin* standing in *vrikśāsana,* the tree posture. This posture is also seen once at Śriṅgēri also. On the south wall of the Śriṅgēri temple, an *yōgin* is depicted with hair tied in a bow-shaped knot, in *vrikśāsana*, stands beside a stylized tree, on the other side of which is a long-haired Siddha watching him. The east wall has a female *yōgini*-Siddha, standing in *vrikśāsana*, with stylized trees on each side of her to echo her tree posture. Further along this wall is an *yōgin* performing this *āsana* as part of *pañcagnitapasya*, the five-fire-austerity. Similar reprsentations of *vrikśāsana* are found in many styles and forms in the sculptures of Tañjāvūr (Fig.115), Tiruvotriyūr (Figs.116) and Villianūr (Fig.117).

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[108] G.W.Briggs, *Op.cit,*p.200.

[109] T.N. Ganapathy, *philosophy*, p.17

However, in the Vidyāśaṅkara temple at Śringeri, there are eight images of *yōgins* engaged in exceedingly complex and difficult *āsanas*. Five of these are of *kukkutāsana* and variations. *Kukkuta* means a cock, on which the posture is based. In the standard *kukkutāsana*, the *yōgin* sits in *padmāsana*, the lotus posture, inserts the hands between the thighs and calls and lifts the body off the ground, supported on the hands. The *Kubjikamata*, an early *Tāntric* work on *yōga* of about the tenth century, includes *kukkutāsana* as effective in facilitating the release of the *Kuṇḍalini*, the vital cosmic energy, conceived as a coiled serpent at the base of the spine. Beside the north *gōpura*, on the *prakāra* at Śrisailam, is a panel showing two yōgins in the forest. One is in a variation of *kukkutāsana* combined with a variation of *baddhakōnāsana*, the cobbler's sitting pose, and the other is in a difficult sitting posture[110].

The more interesting thing in Bāhūr temple is, the principal deity of the temple itself having the suffix '*nātha*' in his name as Mūlanātha. Apart from these, many other different *yōgic* practices are also depicted in the pillars of the *maṇḍapa* such as a *yōgi* is depicted in a seated posture and his knees were tied with *yōgapaṭṭa* with crossed legs that rested on the ground (Fig.100). They are having a long beard and their hairs are matted, eyes are closed denoting their deep meditation, their hands rest down on knees. He is wearing bangle like rings on his arms and wrist. Some of them wearing garland of beads (*rudrākṣamāla*) in their necks, holding *yōgadaṇda* and *kamaṇḍalu* in their hands. Some of the ascetics are depicted in *añjali mudra*, and in *Dwi Pāda Sīrsāsana*[111], some of them are naked as their secret parts are visible, one of them carrying a *liṅgā* in one hand and hold his male organ in other hand and so on. In one of the sculptures, a *yōgi* is depicted as he is meditating in a tremendous way as his head rest at ground and his legs folded upwards (*Ūrdhva Padmāsana* in *Sīrsāsana*)[112]. In many of the sculptures, above to the head of the yōgic practitioners or Siddhas an *aṣtadala padmā* is engraved [113] (Fig.130). Some of the unique representations of *Yōgic* exercises from several temples in the study area are discussed below.

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[110] Richard Shaw, *Op.cit* , p. 244

[111] For more *yōgic āsanās* See B. K. S. Iyengar, *op.cit.*, p. 307-308

[112] See B. K. S. Iyengar, *op.cit.*, p. 203-204

[113] The eight petalled lotus (*astadala padma*) is used as universal *tāntric* symbol. The petals are said to be *Ka, Ca, Ta, Ta, Pa, Ya, Sa*, and *La*, which is known as *guptarayogini*, the attainment is known as *mahimasiddhi.* See N. N. Bhattacharyya, *op.cit.*, p. 410.

Representations of the *yōgic* exercises involving the use of *yōgadaṇda* are found in many temples such as Nandibeta in Karnātaka (Fig.96); Narasimha temple at Lower and Upper Ahobilam in Āndhra Pradesh (Figs.103,105), Marakāṇam in Tamiḻnādu (Fig.106), which indicate the strenuous exercises that require sitting in the same posture over long periods.

On the contrary, the sculptural examples of Tiruvaṭṭāṟu in Tamiḻnādu show some interesting schematic representations of the *Yōgic cakra*s in the human body. These sculptures also carry a sexual dimension of the *Yōgic* powers, in the portrayal of ithyphallic men (Figs.134-138; 140-143). Similar examples are also found in the temples of Bāhūr, Puduchērry (Fig.144); Sriraṅgam (Fig.145); Tirupathisāram, Tamiḻnādu (Fig.146) and Āraṇmula, Kēraḷā (Fig.147).

There are some sculptures which show a variety of *Yogāsana* postures of the *Nāthapanthis* such as *ardha-padmāsana* (Fig.92,93) together with *hamsapakśa mudrā* (Fig.94) *katya valambita mudrā* (Fig.95), *lōla-hasta mudrā, kaṅgula (dhyāni) mudrā* (Fig.97), *Vrkśāsana* with *dhyāni/kaṅgula mudrā* (Fig.99), *ardha-padmāsana* with *katya valambita mudrā* (Fig.104,107), *lalitāsana* with *abhaya mudrā* (Fig.110) *Vrkśāsana* with *abhaya mudrā* (Fig.111), *padmāsana* with *añjali mudrā* (Fig.112), *ardha-padmāsana* with *lōla-hasta* and *abhaya-mudrā* (Fig.113), *paryaṅkāsana* with *daṇda-hasta mudra* (Fig.118), *Sastikāsana* with *daṇda-hasta mudrā* (Fig.119), *pārśvottānāsana* with *Gaṇēśa mudrā* (Fig.122), *Dwi-pāda Sirasāsana* with *añjali mudrā* (Fig.129), *ūrdhva padmāsana* in *Sirisāna* together with *Gaṇēśa mudrā* (Fig.131).

These *yōgic* exercises performed by the Nāthapanthis, Siddhas and female Siddhas indicate the popularity of the Siddha philosophy in the medieval society, cutting across the geographical, vernacular and gender specificities. They can also be considerd as visual aids which were used to teach the initiates about the intricacies of the exercises.

Cakra Pūjā or *Bhairavi Cakra*

The worship of Śakti is centered chiefly in mystic circle known as *Bhairavi Cakra*. It is otherwise called *Cakrapūjā*, in which there was free and unrestricted use

of liquor, meat and woman. In Rajasekhara's play *Karpūramañjari*, Bhairavānanda the master magician declares that he is an adherent of the *Kaula* way, drinks with and enjoys women and so goes forward to salvation. He describes the *Kaula* religion as charming to all, its only requirements are a hot strumpet for wife, plenty of meat and wine, alms and a pelt to serve as bed; and opines that while gods like Hari and Brahma prescribe meditation, the study of the Vedas, and sacrifices as leading to final release, Śiva has the sole credit of having devised a way to salvation consistent with the pleasures of love and wine. The Kaulācāryās did not observe any restrictions regarding food, drink and caste. In the *Bhairavi Cakra* where *Kaulas* gather to worship Śakti, all castes were admitted, meat of every sort excepting perhaps beef was allowed, and every worshipper was required to contract a marriage which was to last to the end of the gathering. In the literature of medieval Āndhra, we come across terms like *Bhairavaitantra*, *Bhairavayōgini* and *Yōginicakra*[114].

Cakrapūjā or the circle of worshippers comprises of alternating male and female, with an emphasis upon ritual nudity prominent in both groups. The circle resembles the womb or feminine symbol, which is to enclose and entrap the psychic or *pranic* energies exuded by the naked, living flesh of the participants. As their sexual-emotional excitement increases, more radiation is produced for occult use. This energy forms a "cone of power" over the group and is similar to the whirling vortex of psychic force released during copulation[115]. In this ritual one or more male *Tāntric* practitioners surrounds himself or themselves with female *Tāntrics*, most probably '8, 16 or 64' are recommended numbers. But only a few people are fit to use this Five '*M*'s. Of the three types of human beings, viz., *paśu*, *vīrā* and *divyā*, only the '*vīrā*' type is allowed to use the *pañca-makāras* or '*kaula dravyās*' in the *Tāntric* rituals[116]. The woman with whom sexual intercourse is to be had is called *Śakti* or *Prakṛti* or *Lata* and this special ritual is called *Latasādhana*. According to *Kaulavalinirnaya*, sexual intercourse is the only means by which the aspirant can

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[114] B.S.L. Hanumantha Rao, *Religion in Andhra: A Survey of Religious Developments in Andhra from early times up to A.D. 1325*, Archeological Series No.69, Department of Archeology and Museums, Government of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad, 1993, p. 292

[115] Jonn Mumford, *Ecstasy of Tantra*, Liewellyn Publications, USA., 10th rep., 2003, p. 107

[116] The *Tantras* speak of three temperaments, dispositions, characters (*bhava*), or classes of men, namely, the *pashu-bhava* (animal), *vira-bhava* (heroic), and *divya-bhava* (*deva*-like or divine). These divisions are based on various modifications of the *guna* as they manifest in man (*jiva*); see Arthur Avalon (Sir John Woodroffe) (Trans), *Mahanirvana Tantra - Tantra of the Great Liberation*, p. 25.

become a Siddha. Every woman is fit for intercourse, except the wife of the *Guru* or of one who has attained the status of *vīrā*. This *Cakrapūjā* is also known as *yōṉipūjā*, mostly performed by the *Kāyasiddhas*[117], who belongs to the *Vāmācāra* group[118]. The Kāpālikā sect is the best known *Tāntrika* sect which freely indulged in the usage of the *pañcamakāra*. The sexual depictions which appear in large number in both Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava temples speak volumes about the popularity of the sexual rituals during the medieval times.

In the spiritual *Pañcamakāra*, *Māmsa* is the tongue, and eat meat by preserving silence. *Matśya* is the breath, and eating fish means holding the breath via *prāṇāyāma*. *Mudrā* or eating grain is the holding of the body in a certain posture to encourage free movement of *Kuṇḍalini* within it. *Madira* is the wine of Amrita which drops from the glands within the head into the body, and *Maithuna* is the union of the (*Kuṇḍalini*) *Śakti* with Śiva in the *Sahasrarā*. However in the present situation, in one form or another, instead of using the above said Five '*M*'s, still millions of people performing the *Pūjā* with five elements in a very simplest way.

This simplest *Pūjā* involves offering to God flowers to represent the Ether elements, incense for the Air element, a lamp for fire, food for water, and sandalwood paste or another fragrant unguent, for Earth[119]. Thus these flowers, incense, lamp, food and sandal paste are considered as the representatives of the five elements as well as the substitutes of the *Pañcamakāra*. Similarly, the impact and imprints of this *tāntric* cult and practices are still retained in the society in different other forms. For instance, the Five '*M*'s are now replaced with the *Pañcagāvya* in the temple rituals of the present day. The *Pañcagāvya* consists of five products of cow such as milk, curd,

[117] See R. Venkataraman, *op.cit*. pp. 94-96; he classifies the Tamiḻ Siddhas into Sanmārgasiddhas, Ñāṉasiddhas and Kāyasiddhas. Further he also gives more descriptions on performing of *Vāmipūjā* (*yōnipūjā*) as described by Siddha Rōmariṣi.

[118] The Siddhas are classified into two broad categories such as *Dakśiṇa* (right hand) and *Vāmā* (left hand). It is generally held that those who participate in the rituals of five '*M*'s belong to the category of *Vāmācāra*. According to a different tradition everyone is a follower of *Dakśiṇācāra* by birth. It is only by initiation that one becomes a *Vāmācāri*. The followers of *Dakśiṇācāra* worship the great goddess in the traditional way. They believe in *varnāsrama* and in the existing *Brahmanical* methods. See N. N. Bhattacharyya, *op.cit.*, pp. 401, 421.

[119] Robert E. Svoboda, *Aghora II: Kuṇḍalini*, Rupa and Co., New Delhi, (23rd rep.), 2011, pp. 95-97

ghee/butter, urine and dung, were all of great purifying potency, especially when combined in a single mixture[120].

According to a description of it found in the *Kaulavalinirñaya*, an equal number of men and women, without distinction of caste and even of blood-relation secretly meet at night and sit in a circle. The goddess is represented by a *yantra* or diagram. The woman cast their bodices in a receptacle and each of the assembled men finds a female companion for that night by taking a bodice out to those contained in the receptacle[121]. This *Bhairavi Cakra* is scrupulously kept secret in all the *Tantras*[122]. In *Bhairavi Cakra* there is no distinction of caste, and there is no restriction about one eating the remnants of others' meals. The worshippers joining the *cakras* are considered as part and parcel of the Great Mother Goddess. The significance of these *cakras* is that the female agents referred to, should be worshipped as the Mother Goddess by the devotee, by remaining unaffected with passions and temptations. The meat of birds or beasts represents the sacrifice of attachment and animalistic[123]. Because of the above rituals, it is commonly said that the siddhas are believed in *bhōgamārga* and seem to have performed group sex, to attain immortality.

In the sculptural representations, generally the *Tāntric* practitioner is shown standing in *añjali mudrā* whose hands are raised above the head. His legs are just bent towards the right side. He is shown ithyphallic or with a virile membrane. The practitioner shown with an ithyphallic pose is an illustration of the ascent of *kuṇḍalini* (semen), leading to the *sahasrāra* or union with godhood. Usually a group of practitioners are depicted along with a depiction of a nude woman who represents the *Bhairavi* or female *śakti*. Here, the female called a Bhairavi in the sexual rites is shown standing before the practitioner as nude with legs wide apart or displaying her secret parts. Surrounding her on either side are three or more male *tāntric* practitioners similarly nude with virile membranes in *añjali mudrā*. In many of the

[120] According to a legend, the cow *Surabhi*, the mother of all cows, was one of the treasures churned from the cosmic ocean. Therefore cow and its products are considered as divine and healthy respectively. However, there is no any cow-goddess and also no temples are there in their honour. See A.L. Basham, *The Wonder that was India*, Sidgwick and Jackson, London, 1967, p. 321

[121] N. N. Bhattacharyya, *op.cit.*, pp. 121-122

[122] for more information about this practice see Pranab Bandyopadhyay, *op.cit.*, pp. 135-36; and also, G. W. Briggs, *Op.cit*, 1938, pp. 172-73

[123] Pranab Bandyopadhyay, *op.cit.*, p. 136

representations, the male *tāntric* practitioners are shown inferior to the *Bhairavi* and that is portrayed in the reduction of the size of the male members in comparison to the *Bhairavi*. In some cases the male membes are shown in a low profile at the feet of the *Bhairavi*.In the solitary example found in a small frieze at Śrisailam, the nude *Bhairavi* is shown seated in a squatting posture (*Upavēsāsana*) with her legs wide apart on either side of whom three ithyphallic male practitioners are shown in *Añjali mudrā* (Fig.148). Except this all other sculptural examples of *Bhairavi Cakra* are in standing posture. In another representation of *Bhairavi Cakra* at Paṇdacōḻanallur, Puduchērry, the nude Bhairavi is shown standing in a *varada mudrā* and other practitioners in *añjali mudrā*, and one of them is kneeling down to her feet (Fig.149). All the remaining examples of *Bhairavi cakra* in the study area both in stone and stucco media, show the Female in sensuous postures, semi-nude, showing her secret parts in sexual orgy at the feet of whom are the male practitioners, nude and erect, in *Añjalimudrā*, in sexual excitement advancing towards the *Bhairavi* (See Figs 150-160).

Though being a Vaiṣṇavite temple, hundreds of sculptures relating to the *Bhairavi cakra* are found in the pillared halls of Āthikēśava Perumal temple at Tiruvaṭṭāṛu in Kaṉṉiyākumari District. In the *āsthāna-maṇḍapa* of Tiruparaṅkuṉram, interesting sculptures illustrating such kinds of rituals are depicted. Similar type of sculptures depicted with a group of *Tāntric* practitioners of *Bhairava Cakra* are frequently found in almost all Śiva temples of south India. In Tirukāmēśvara Temple of Villianūr, Puduchērry, more than twenty such panels representing the *Bhairavi Cakra* is depicted and an inscription without the depiction of *Bhairavi* or the female performer is also found in one of the pillars of Bāhūr Sri Mūlanātha Swāmy temple.

In the *vimānā* of the Pañcanadīśvara temple at Tiruvandarkoil, a group of stucco sculptures are found in the north-west corner, depicting the ritual of *Bhairavi cakra* (Fig.159). Similar stucco representations of the *Bhairavi cakra* is also found in the *Gōpura* of Tirukkaṇṇamaṅgai Temple of Tamiḻnādu,where the Bhairavi is surounded by three men in *Añjalimudrā* and wearing loincloths. Similarly the Bhairavi is also covering her secret parts partly with a saree (Fig.161).

Further, depictions of *Bhairavicakra* is also found in various Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava temples of Tamiḻnādu such as Sri Raṅganātha Swāmy temple at Śriraṅgam (Fig.151) and Ucchi Piḷḷaiyar Temple in Trichy, Chidambaram Nataraja Temple, Viruthagirīsvara temple Virudhāchalam, and also various other important famous medieval temples of Tirunelvēli, Kaṉṉiyākumari, Coimbatore, Dindigul, Villupuram districts of Tamiḻnādu. The depiction of *Bhairavicakra* worship is also found on Naraśimha temple at Lower Ahobilam, Śiva temple at Mahānandi etc. in Āndhra Pradesh. In Karnātaka, in most of the Śaivite temples one can find the sculptures representing the *Bhairavi Cakra*, for instance, Somēśvara Temple at Ulsūr, Yōga-Nandīśvara temple at Nandi, Śiva temple at Āvani, Bhairava temple at Nañjungudu etc. In Kēraḷā also comparable depictions are found in many temples of medieval period. More sculptures of *Bhairavicakra* are found in the pillars and in the pillared halls of Āraṇmula, Tiruvaṇanthapuram, Tirumūḻikalam, Tirukātkarai, Tirunāvāi, Tiruvaṉvaṇdūr, Tirukadithānam, etc. Interestingly all of these temples are at present celebrated Vaiṣṇavite centres in Kēraḷā. In the same way, in other parts of south India, these sculpture occupy an important position and found frequently in almost all the temples that constructed during the Vijayanagara-Nāyaka periods and afterwards.

Images showing the making of *Siṅhanāda*

One of the interesting aspects found in the temple sculptures in relation to the Siddha tradition is producing of *Siṅhanāda* or roar of a lion. References were also found in the songs of the Tamiḻ Siddha Śivavākkiyar.

aṅgaliṅga pītamāi ayiraṇdu eḻuthilum
poṅgu thāmarayiṉum porunthu vārakathiṉum
paṅgukoṇda sōthiyum parantha añje ḻuthumē
Siṅgінātha ōsaiyum Śivāyam allathu illaiyē[124].

The literal meaning of this song is, one who wears the *liṅga* in his body, who thinks the god in his thought, often recites the word *Namaśivāya*, and producing the sound of the *siṅginātha* are all none without *Śivāyam* (or Śiva). Further references on *Siṅginātham* are also found in one of the Telugu literary piece *Kavi Karna Rasāyanam* by Sanguchala Nirishma Kavi. The word *Siṅginātham* is derived from the

[124] Śivavākkiyar Pātalkaḷ – 165, see Tha. Kovendhan, *Siddhar Pātalkaḷ*, *Op.cit.*, p. 33.

word *Siṅgha* means Lion and *nātham* usually means sound[125]. Through the horns of the deer, the Siddhas used to make a sound which is similar to the roar of lion (*Siṅhanāda*). However, sometimes these depictions of deer horns are misinterpreted as '*Chillums*'[126] which are used to smoke *gañja* (a dried leaf which will have an intoxicating effect when its smoke is inhaled). The *Nava Nātha Caritra* of Gaurana[127] mentions that Mīṉanātha was adorned with the deer's horn, which indicates the usage of the deer horn by the Nāthas. The Kālamukas of the 11th-12th century were adorned with these deer horns and one of their sectarian meetings is actually called '*Simhapariśad*'[128] (Assembly of Lions). In some of the sculptures at Villianūr, Bāhūr, Trichy, Tiruparaṅkuṉṟam, Śriraṅgam temples and also in the temple sculptures of Karnātaka and Āndhra regions such kinds of ascetics are clearly depicted like producing *Siṅhanāda* using the horn of deer, and a *kuṇdala* is also very clearly depicted in their ears. More over all the Navanāthas are characteristically shown wearing the deer horn in their necks as a medallion. It shows the amalgamation of the ritual paraphernalia between the Kāpālikas, Kālamukhas and Nātha-Siddhas (Figs.23, 83-90).

Representations of Kuṇḍalini Yōga

Kuṇḍalini is the energy in the form of a coiled serpent remaining latent in the *mūlādhārā*. As the source of all energy *Kuṇḍalini* reveals itself when roused by *yōgic* exercise. This ancient belief is at the root of the concept of *Kāyasādhanā*, so much emphasised in the *Śākta* and the Buddhist *Tantras*. Some of the Tamil̲ Siddhas call a Siddha as one who worships the *Kuṇḍalini śakti* called *Vālai* in Tamil̲. A Siddha is one who enjoys the fruits of *yōga*, i.e., liberation, by rousing the *Kuṇḍalini*[129]. According to the *Śākta* scheme there are six nerve-plexes or wheels (*satcakras*) within

[125] Mocharla Ramakrishna Kavi (ed.), *Kavi Karna Rasayanam of Sanguchala Nirishma Kavi*, Andhra Pradesh Sahitya Academy, Hyderabad, 1967, pp. 2, 67.

[126] Chillum is a pipe used to smoke marijuana or hashish mixed with tobacco. It is three or four inches long and is straight, tapering from a wide bowl to a thin mouth.

[127] Gaurana's *Nava Nātha Caritra*, (*Dvipada Kāvya* in Telugu), Ed. T. Koteswara Rao, Hyderabad, A.P. Sahitya Academy, 1984, p.35; the *prakāra* walls sculptures of Srisailam depict the gifting of such deer horns to the Nāthas by the devotees. See Chandramouli, N., *Tantric Symbols in the Art of Srisailam,* paper presented in National Seminar on Tantrism, Osmania University, Hyderabad, 2002.

[128] For more details about the Kālamukhās, see David Lorenzen, *Kapalikas and Kalamuhkas (Two lost Saivite Sects),* Delhi, 1972.

[129] T.N. Ganapathy, *The Philosophy of the Tamil Siddhas*, ICPR, New Delhi, 2004, p.20

the human body[130] and these are in the *mūlādhārā* (rectal region, at the base of the spine), *svadhisthānā* (immediately above the sexual organs), *maṇipūrāka* (the region of the navel), *anāhata* (region around the heart), *viśuddha* (at the front of the throat), and *ājna*[131] (between the eyebrows). The highest cerebral region is known as *sahasrāra*[132]. Through *yōgic* exercise this *Kuṇḍalini śakti* has to be pushed up through the two main nerves, *iḍa* and *piṅgala*, so that it may reach the *sahasrara* or the highest cerebral region where it should meet its source[133]. Then the nectar which reached the *sahasrara* is consumed by the yōgic practitioner forms the final stage of this *Kuṇḍalini yōga*. To consume the nectar the practitioner have to turn his tongue back above the palate in order to drink the nectar of immortality dripping from the thousand petalled lotus at the crown (*sahasrāra*). The the practice of turning the tongue back above the palate is known as the *khēcarī-mudrā* in *haṭha yōga*[134].

In the Ādikēśava Perumal temple at Tiruvaṭṭāṟu in Kaṉṉiyākumari district of Tamiḻnādu, there are several interesting sculptures showing the *Kuṇḍalini* aspects.In one of the sculptures, a *yōgic* practitioner is shown with a snake beside him as climbing up. It denotes that the *yōgi'*s practice of *Kuṇḍalini yōga* is in a progressive stage. Above his head a four petalled lotus is depicted which is denoting that he is in initial stage of practising *Kuṇḍalini* from *mūlādhāra* (in the symbolic form of four petalled lotus) (Fig.133). In another sculpture, a *yōgi* is standing in

130 Except *sahasrara*, the other six are called *cakras* (circles) and these seven are represented with lotuses which having 4, 6, 10, 12, 16, 2 to 1000 petals from *Mūlādhāra* to *Sahasrara* respectively. Each lotus was assigned a colour, a *bija* mantra and a presiding deity with his consort. See N. N. Bhattacharyya, *Op.cit*, 1982, pp. 226-227; For more details about the *satcakras* see S.C. Banerji, *A Brief History of Tantra Literature*, Naya Prokash, Calcutta, 1988, p.14 ;and also see R. Venkataraman, *Op.cit*, Appendix-17, p. 233.

131 *Ājna cakra* has two large petals, each divided into forty-eight smaller petals, giving ninety-six in all. See Omraam Mikhael Aivanhov, *Man's Subtle Bodies and Centres: the Aura, the Solar Plexus, the Cakras…*, Prosveta, France, 1997, p. 134

132 Generally 1000 petalled lotus, but it has 960 outer petals and a central corolla of twelve petals, which gives 972 petals in all. The twelve petals of the corolla are golden yellow and the outer ring of 960 petals is purple, and the two rings spin in opposite directions. See Omraam Mikhael Aivanhov, *op.cit.*, pp. 134-135

133 In the *Kaula* sexual practice, the *Kuṇḍalini shakti* is visualised in the form of the release of the semen. The release of the semen is to be with held and the energy is to be send in reverse direction to the *sahasrāra padma* which is turned inwards. Through *yōga sādhana*, the semen has to be turned upwards and energy of the semen is to be retained in the *sahasrāra* which is the zenith of the union of the *puruśa* and *prakriti*. This reverse process of the *Kuṇḍalini* yōga is the peculiarity of the *kaula* school.

134 Gavin Flood, *Op.cit*, 2006, p. 175

Pārśvōṭṭānāsana[135] is showing his right hand index finger pointed near his buttocks (probably where the *mūlādhāra cakra* is) and the left hand index finger showing his head (where the *sahasrāra* is) (Fig.134). In another sculpture the *yōgi* holding his male organ (penis) in his right hand and his left hand finger showing his head, which may indicate that his *Kuṇḍalini śakti* reached his *sahasrāra* from *mūlādhāra* (Fig.135). Apart from these more than hundreds of similar sculptures are found in the first inner *prakāra* of the Tiruvaṭṭāṟu temple with slight stylistic variations in the *yōgic* postures.

One interesting and rare representation of the *yōgic cakras* is found on the ceiling beam of the *Puthumaṇdapa* of Tiruvotriyūr Śiva temple. In this, on the body of a standing human Figure the *sat-cakras* are depicted in the respective places of his body starting from *mūlādhāra* to *Sahasrāra*. To his left (*iḍa*) moon is depicted and to his right (*piṅgala*) Sun is depicted. Though it seems to be of a later period, this kind of sculpture is not found in any other temple (Fig.139).

Besides these sculptures,on some temple exteriors, like Villianūr, Siṅgarikudi, Tiruvaṇdārkoil in Puduchērry region and in the *maṇdapa* pillars of Susindram, Madurai, Aḻagarkoil, Śrivilliputtur, Paḻaṉi, Trichy, Śriraṅgam, Kāramadai, Kāñchipuram, Vēllore, Tirukaḻukuṉram in Pondicherry, one finds the representation of the ascetics. Interestingly one can find a series of such erotic sculptures engraved in the steps of pond at Chiṉṉaiyanpēṭṭai village of Cheṅgam *taluk* in Tiruvaṇṇāmalai. Thus, the erotic imagery was probably the result of incorporating *Tāntric* motifs into the architecture of the temple.

Representations of Tāntric deities in the Temple Gōpuras

The Vijayanagara rulers consciously promoted the *tāntric* symbolism in the sculptural art. In the *gōpuras* number of *Tāntric* images including the *Tāntric* rites, images of Nātha-Siddhas and other *Tāntric* deities including various forms of Śiva are sculpted in different styles and forms, either in stucco in the upper part of the *gōpura* or in the granite structure of the lower parts of the *gōpura*. The Nāthas/Siddhas

[135] *Pārśva* means side or flank. *Uttāna* (*ut*=intense, and *tān*=to extend, stretch, lengthen) means an intense stretch. The name implies a pose in which the side of the chest is stretched intensely. See B. K. S. Iyengar, *Light on Yoga*, Harper Collins Publishers, New Delhi, 1991, pp. 78-79

images in stucco sculpture found in the temples of Kumbakōṇam region. Most of these temples belong to the Cōḻa period. But the super structure of the temple *vimāna* and the entrance *gōpura* in stucco are the aditions of the Vijayanagara-Nāyaka period and later. At the top of the southern side *maṇdapa* of the Tiruvīḻimiḻalai Vīḻināthar temple, Kumbakōṇam, the images of Mīṉanātha and Gōrakṣanātha are found in an artistic manner, which is differ from other ordinary pillar relief sculptures. In Tañjāvūr, for a long period the *Tāntric* cult was popular as revealed by the sculptural representations found in *gōpura* and Nandi *maṇdapa*[136] of the Brahadīśvara temple.

Images depicting the *Tāntric* rites and Siddhas are also found in the *gōpuras* of Vaḷḷīśvaram Śiva temple at Tuṟaiyūr near Sittaṉṉavāsal of Pudukoṭṭai district, at Tiruvoṭṭriyur near Chennai, Tirukaḻukuṉram, Tiruchendhūr Murugaṉ temple, Tiruchenkōdu Śiva temple and few other Śaivite temples in Nāmakkal and Erode districts, Jalakaṇtēśvara temple at Vellore, Kāmātchi temple, Ēkāmbaranātha, Varadharāja Perumal temple at Kāñchipuram, Susindram Tāṉumālaya Perumal temple, Tiruvaṭṭāṟu Āthikēśava Perumal temple in Kaṉṉiyākumari District, Tiruppullāni Āthijaganātha Perumal temple in Rāmnād district, Ucchi Piḷḷaiyār temple at Trichy, Sri Raṅganātha Perumal at Śriraṅgam, Soundararāja Perumal temple, Oppiliappar temple, Tirukadaiyūr Abirami temple of the Nāgapaṭṭiṇam district, Tarbārunēśvara temple at Kāraikāl, Natarāja temple at Chidambaram, Vaithiyanātha temple at Vaithīśvarankoil in Tamiḻnādu are all having different kinds of *Tāntric* sculptures, and most of them remain unnoticed.

Evolution of the *Tāntric* Sculptures

In the initial phases, the Nātha-Siddhas sculptures started occupying in very less numbers only in the pillar reliefs, then in the top of the entrance *gōpuras* of the temples in the subsequent periods. These Siddhas and Nāthas deserve the place of minor deities and have less importance comparing to the other semi-divine beings of the Hindu pantheon. As time passed these sculptures, appears repeatedly in the same temples all over south India. Particularly, during the Vijayanagara and Nāyakas times, these *Tāntric* sculptures gained more importance and occupied a major number of

136 The Nandi *mandapa* and the bull are the contribution of Tañjāvūr Nāyaks in 16-17th centuries. Kudavayil Balasubramaniam, *Tañjai Rājarārēśvaram*, Ajantha Pathippagam, Tañjāvūr, 2009, p. 38

pillars and *gōpuras*, on par with other demi-gods. The most popular images of Nātha-Siddhas are found in Vijayanagara sculpture. The only one identifiable among them is Matśyēndranātha, who seated on a fish. He also appears occasionally on temple door-jambs. For instance, at Hampi, one door-jamb has the relief of this sage on his fish, while the second has that of a *yōgi*, seated cross-legged on a *makara*, with his hands resting on a staff, his ears elongated with the weight of his circular earrings[137].

In the 16th century Vijayanagara artists had evolved their own style which, when disseminated throughout the empire, was to be further elaborated by the successors of the Vijayanagara imperial power. Sculptors of this period generally followed the traditional guidelines for the representation of the divine personages. For the portrayal of human beings, they relied more on observation than on prescriptions of the texts[138]. Besides, they also implemented their imagination in their works. Therefore, a radical change and development took place in depicting such sculptures of the Nāthas and the Siddhas along with their vehicles. The initial impact on scholars was the native quality or crudeness of the some of these works, qualities which they immediately connected with folk art; hence the style of Vijayanagara sculpture was defined as folkish[139]. Saletore noted many different aesthetic traditions combined in the formation of the Vijayanagara style of art such as the Deccan, the Tamiḻ and above all the local folk style which are responsible for the earliest sculptures at Vijayanagara. Later on, the Deccan influence lost its ground and the Tamiḻ tradition became dominant in the formation of the mature Vijayanagara style of architecture and sculpture. Thus, the folk as well as the sophisticated temple style co-existed at Vijayanagara, serving different purposes. Most of the sculptures which found in the temples are the depictions of more prominent gods/goddesses and their attendants, local/minor deities, well celebrated heroes or human and divine personalities.

In the evolution of such *Tāntric* sculptures, the sculptors played an important role. In the creation of imagery of deities, the artist had to look into his own heart and

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[137] Dallapiccola, *Op.cit.*, p. 79

[138] *Ibid*, pp. 7, 10

[139] R.N. Saletore, *Vijayanagara Art*, Sundeep Prakashan, Delhi, 1982, p.130; also quoted in Anna Dallapiccola, *Op.cit.*, p. 4

create the image that he had in his mind. He had not only to gaze inwardly but also had to practically exclude himself from the external trammels of this world and meditate on the deity he was about to create. Therefore, the characteristic of an image is its power of helping forward contemplation and *yōga*. The human maker of images should therefore be meditative. Besides there is no other way of knowing the character of an image, even direct observation, is of no use. Therefore it was as good as understood that the artist's success depended on the power of his meditation, the outcome of which was the image. Moreover, the images were intended for the ignorant and the artist, who had primarily to become a *yōgi,* had to perceive the images in his heart. These craftsmen sought those sculptures only through ideal forms. Their aim was rarely to represent nature as it appeared to him because, they never attempted to imitate but only aimed at creation of a spiritual nature. They desired to suggest the idea behind sensuous appearance, not to give the detail of the seeming reality that was in truth, but through his *Māyā* or illusion[140]. Gopinatha Rao quotes this as

> "*Śivātmani paśyaṅti pratimāsu na yōginah*
> *Ajñānām bhāvanārthāya pratimā parikalpitāh*" [141].

Hence it may be stated that in most of the Indian sculptures generally a kind of impersonality is present. The artist had to so detach himself from his creation that he leaves no place for his individual fancies to deface the idealism in the facial expression of his image[142]. Later on these craftsmen virtually forgot their *Śilpa Śastric* orders. Sometimes craftsmen had their own ideals in the execution of their art.

When *Tāntric* ideas crept into Indian religious thought, the creative instinct of the Indian artist was constrained to a certain extent and deities came to be represented with various hands and manifold attributes. Thus depiction of images with different *mudrās* (pose) and various weapons clutched in its hands came to represent its qualities and their nature. Hence the *sāṭṭvika* image had the *yōga-mudrā*, conferring boons and encouraging the surrounding worshippers. The fiercer or *rājasika mudra* depicts an image, adorned with a variety of weapons, seated on a *vāhana* and offering

[140] R.N. Saletore, *Vijayanagara Art*, Sundeep Prakashan, Delhi, 1982, p.208

[141] T.A. Gopinatha Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol. I, Part II, p.26

[142] R.N. Saletore, *Op.cit.*, p.207

boons to its devotees. The fiercest type was the *tāmasika* pose depicting a terrible form, armed and destroying the demons, symbolizing evil. By the same way, the nāthas are also depicted as they are seated in an assortment of mythical animals like *Vyāli*, *makara*, scorpion, tortoise, snake, boar, fish, lion and tiger. Another view is that this deity entered the Brahmanical pantheon when *Tāntrism* was exerting its influence over many Indian religions, "reversing the trends of progressive thought, thereby inducing many of the deities to reappear in their anthropomorphic forms". These struggles appear rather far-fetched and conjectural to find any reasonable acceptance. All these types of art exist in the Vijayanagara style of art. However, it is impossible to understand fully the one without the other. The very significant feature of this art is a manifestation of traditional symbolism and it is generally believed to be familiar to at least many[143] of the common people.

Why these Sculptural Arts developed during Vijayanagara Period?

The Vijayanagara Empire comprised the whole of South India from the south of the river Kṛśṇa. Therefore, it comprised the territories which are already ruled over by the Kadambas, Pallavas, Cōḻas, Pāṇdyas, Chāḷukyas, Hoysālas, Kākatiyas, etc. Hence traits of all these traditional schools continued to be there in the respective regions though the dominating impact was very much prevalent, particularly arising out of political reasons and due to the changed trend and time. However, the predominating element was more a Dravidian than any other. During the Vijayanagara period, the main stress was on mass and variety in their creations, sometimes not strictly adhering to the established canons, proportions etc.

During the early days of the Vijayanagara Empire, the temples are of modest dimensions like the later Chāḷukyan ones. Therefore, the sculptural art of the early Vijayanagara have the impact of the Chāḷukyan style. But when the empire was expanded up to the entire South India, it had to assimilate thoughts and ideas of other schools and regions which influenced the creation of temples and sculptures in bigger dimensions and massive sizes[144]. Probably master-sculptors were not employed all the time and for that reason some of the sculptures were left unfinished or finished in

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[143] R.N. Saletore, *Vijayanagara Art*, Sundeep Prakashan, Delhi, 1982, p.208

[144] K.M.Suresh, *Sculptural Art of Hampi*,Directorate of Archaeology and Museums,Mysore,1998, p. 39

crude ways. But normally they are always well-proportioned as seen in most of the sculptures though carved even in granite media.

There prevail many reasons for establishing the immense Hindu temples depicted with various sculptures. One of the principal political reasons was, the southern part of the India was invaded by Mālik Kafur, the general of Khilji Sultān of Delhi in 1311 C.E. and again by another general Muhammad Bin Tughluk in 1327 C.E. The aggressors destroyed the kingdoms, looted the wealth, forcibly converted the Hindus to Islam, and demolished their temples. This contravention of Islam into political, social and religious fields of the Hindus led to the creation of awareness for their traditional religions and institutions. Besides, it also leads to the rousing of a realization for a united and strong response and resistance among the Hindus, particularly in the South. This triggered revival eventually culminated in the founding of the Vijayanagara Empire. Meanwhile, the empire also gained strength and expanded under the foundations of the religious awareness, upsurge and unity of its subjects. Therefore, its rulers, their religious leaders and subjects, all stood united to put an end to the Muslim aggression. For the same purpose, the Vijayanagara rulers organized the *Daśara* festivals as a state function and also popularized and celebrated Holi festival. The officers, nobles, merchants and subjects coming from all parts of their empire attended these festivals in large numbers. All these religious and social activities are sculpted in bas-relief, on the walls of the *Mahānavami Dibba*, *prakāra* walls of Hazara Rāmaswāmy temple etc., of Hampi and in other parts of the south India. Thus the empire, with its able and brave warrior-kings, supported by the subjects of all strata of the kingdom, proved an effective embankment against the expansion of the Muslim authority and culture into the South. Even now, its impact can be realized in this part of the country[145].

As observed by K.M. Suresh, "in the congregational prayers of Muslims, the Hindus must have realized a strong religious link or bond to keep them together and united. It resulted in a feeling of unity and oneness for a common cause. Hence the rituals in temples and other institutions were so much elaborated as never seen before to ensure congregations on frequent occasions. And to facilitate their conduct several

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[145] *Ibid*, p. 36

types of *maṇdapas*, halls and other sub-structures were added to the otherwise comparatively simple and smaller temples as in earlier period. As a result we see the *kalyāṇa maṇdapas, vansatostsva, yāga maṇdapas, vēdadhyāna maṇdapas, uyyāle maṇdapas*, long pillared corridors for pilgrims, separate shrines for the goddesses etc., came into existence and use. Similarly taking out periodical processions became popular, particularly the annual car-festivals which forced them to design and form long but stately car-streets, some of which survived into this day".

This was also the force behind the tremendous activity both in the construction of temples and production of sculptural wealth, in stone, in metal as well as in other media like wood, painting etc. They used the granite stones largely for their sculptural art. The easy availability of granite stones resulted in the construction of large number of temples, *maṇdapas*, *gōpuras*, palaces, forts and even monolithic sculptures of massive dimensions throughout their empire. It has even become proverbial in the South to call any tall *gōpura-dwāra* as *Rāya Gōpuram*, *Rāyā* standing for a king of the Vijayanagara Empire[146].

Besides, the tolarent religious situation of the Vijayanagara Empire is reflected in an abundance of ascetic images in both Śaivite and Vaiṣṇavite temples throughout their empire, viz., Hampi, Śriṅgēri, Śrisailam, Villianūr, Tiruvaṭṭāṛu, Śriraṅgam, etc. By a study of the comparative iconography of ascetic images at these temples, it is possible to show that Śaivite ascetic iconography predominates, even in Vaiṣṇava temples like Tiruvaṭṭāṛu, Śriraṅgam, etc., and the main Śaivite sect represented is that of the Nātha Siddhas.

From the above discussion, it is clear that the *tāntric* tradition attained more importance during the medieval period, particularly under Vijayanagara Empire it gained munificient royal support which is reflected in the *tāntric* sculptures on the massive *gōpuras* and large *maṇdapas* of the temples all over south India. The *Tāntric* cults which include the cult of Nātha-Siddhas, cult of *Bhairavi* and other forms of *yōgic* activities got standardized during this period and appeared in their sculptural forms in all the temples of Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava faiths in the entire South India.

146 *Ibid*, pp. 36-37

Why these kinds of mystical and enigmatic sculptures are placed in the temple *maṇdapas*, pillars, *prakāras*, *gōpuras*, and *vimānas,* still remain obscure. All of these depictions indicate the continuation and perpetuation of some secret practices that existed prior to the emergence of the Vijayanagar Empire.

The tradition of portraying such *Tāntric* images in the temple *vimānas* and *gōpuras* are still continuing in this present period also. For instance, the mother goddess in birth-giving posture is depicted in the *vimāna* of a temple of local deity in Ka<u>nn</u>ivādi near Dindigul, the *cakrapūjā* rite is depicted in the *vimāna* of Irumbai Mahākālēśvarā temple; the image of Varāhanātha and other *Tāntric* rites in the Viṣṇu temple at Kālāpet near Puduchērry, the images of Siddhas in various *yōgic* postures, *cakrapūjā* are depicted in the newly renovated *gōpura* of Pērūr Paṭṭīśvarar temple near Coimbatore, images resembling the above said rites are found in the newly erected entrance *gōpura* of Mahānandi in Āndhra Pradesh; and also in the Kōtē Vēṅkatēśvarā temple at Bangalore, Karnātaka. The above said evidences are very few and there are still more representations of such tāntric images found in the newly constructed temples at all over south India, indicates the continuity of this *Tāntric* cult in these regions.

To sum up, starting from the early centuries of Christian era, we have references of the usage of the word *siddham* or *siddhi*. These terms may not directly be connected with the Siddha Cult of the medieval period, but may be considered as a root for this tradition. The first authentic epigraphical evidence we find was the Sō<u>l</u>adēvanahalli inscriptions of Ka rnātaka region which speaks about the existence of Nāthas under the tree and donation of land by the king Rājēndra Cō<u>l</u>a in 1029 C.E. Then two more inscriptions of Coorg district of Karnātaka also refer to a donation of lands to one Siddhēśvara temple. Similarly, there were few *bhikśa* mutts existed at Tirunelvēli on the southern tip of Tami<u>l</u>nādu around 1253 C.E., reveals the truth about the spread of this cult in the whole of south India. These two Tami<u>l</u> inscriptions are not directly speaks about the Siddha cult of those regions, but both of them have the related words of the Siddha cult viz., *Tapasis*, *siśya*, *śivamukthi*, *bhikśa* mutt, and etc. The *Bhikśa Vriti Matha* of Śrisailam of Āndhra Pradesh is a well-known place for its siddha cult. During 13th century we have evidence for the spread of the Nātha Siddha tradition into south India. The Nātha sculptures of Kadapa district having the

inscribed names of respective nāthas on the pedestal portion and one inscription in Nellore district, mentioning different *tāntric* sects popular in the region, indicate that the Nātha Siddha cult received royal patronage during the pre-Vijayanagar period also.

Even though, there are varieties of literary evidences regarding the Siddhas of south India, none of them are clear about their chronology. Similarly, the epigraphical evidences are also too rare to study about the chronology of the Siddhas who lived in these regions.

Though we have the usage of the terms related to the 'Siddha Cult', from the last quarter of the 1st century B.C. and 1st century C.E., the proper terms like 'Nātha or Siddha' appear only after the 10th century in Karnātaka region, nearly from 13th century in Tirunelvēli of Tamil̲nādu, and then between 12th and 15th centuries in the regions of Āndhra Pradesh like Kadapa, Śrisailam, Ālampūr and so on.

Though there are some controversies regarding the origin and nativity of the Nātha cult, it is popularly spread over the northern India and the Western Mahārāśtrā and largely in south India as a pan Indian movement. Since, these ascetics led a nomadic life; it is natural that their name and fame should spread all over the places they visited. Although traditionally the *nava nātha* cult is an established one, there are glaring regional variations in the names of the Nāthas. Matśyēndra and Gōrakṣa appear commonly in all the lists. The Nāthas are largely identified with the help of sculptural representations in the temples, literary sources and other popular folk lore.

In most of the Tamil̲ region, the sculptures of Gōrakṣanātha or a nātha seated on tiger is worshipped by offering flowers and smearing turmeric, applying vermilion powder on it; devotees are not aware that they are worshipping the Nātha or Siddha, but to them it is Lord Ayyappa who is travelling on a tiger, and they narrate the story of Ayyappa bringing a tiger for its milk. Similarly in some of the temples of South Tamil̲nādu, Mīn̲anātha or Matśyēndranātha is worshipped as Lord Kubērā, the protector of the South, telling that fish is the vehicle or symbol of Kubērā. At Viriñjipuram temple in Vēllore district, the nātha seated on a scorpion is worshipped as Lord Yama, and they claims that scorpion is one of his attributes.

Sculptural Representations of Nātha-Siddhas and other *Tāntric* Images



Fig.01, Mīṉanātha, Gōrakṣanātha and Chauraṅgi seated on their respective vehicles Mallikārjuna Temple, Śrisailam, Āndhra Pradesh



Fig.02 Mīṉanātha and Bhairavanātha seated on their vehicles, Śrisailam, Āndhra



Fig. 03 & 04. Nāthas/Siddhas in different *yōgic* postures, Śrisailam, Āndhra Pradesh

Sculptures of Navanāthas, Jalakaṇṭēśvara Temple, Kalāsipāḷayam, Karnātaka



Fig.05 Mīṉanātha



Fig. 06, Gōrakṣa Nātha



Fig.07, Chauraṅgi Nātha



Fig.08, Vyāli Nātha



Fig.09, Varāha Nātha



Fig.10, Nāga Nātha



Fig.11. Bhairava Nātha



Fig.12. Kūrma Nātha



Fig.13.Nātha on a lion

Navanāthas Sculptures, Sōmēśvara Temple, Ulsūr, Karnātaka


Fig.14, Kūrma Nātha


Fig.15, Vyāli Nātha


Fig.16, Nātha on a Lion


Fig.17, Mīṉanātha


Fig.18, Bhairava Nātha


Fig.19, Nāga Nātha


Fig.20, Chauraṅgi


Fig.21, Varāha Nātha


Fig.22, Gōrakṣa Nātha

Sculptural Representations of Mīṉanātha



Fig. 23 Mīṉanātha with other Siddhas, Mallikārjuna Temple, Śrisailam



Fig.24, Tirukāmēśvara Temple, Villianūr, Puduchērry



Fig.25, Tirukkuruṅkudi, Tamiḻnādu



Fig. 26, Mūlanātha Temple, Bāhūr



Fig. 27, Nandi, Karnātaka



Fig.28, Nandibeta, Karnātaka





Fig.29 & 30, Paṭṭināthar Temple, Paṭṭīsvaram, TN





Fig.31, Bhūmīsvara Temple, Marakāṇam, TN

Fig.32, Brahadīsvara, Tañjāvūr, TN

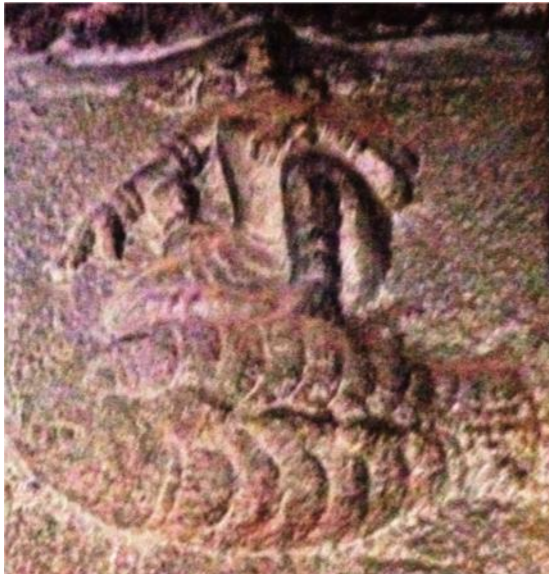




Fig.33, Ēkāmparanātha Temple, Kāñchi, TN

Fig.34, Kāmātchi Temple, Kāñchi, TN





Fig.35, Sōmēśvara Temple, Ulsūr, KN

Fig.36, Kōte Veṅkatēśvara Temple, Bangalore


Fig.37, Lower Ahobilam, Kurnūl, A.P


Fig.38, Lower Ahobilam, Kurnūl, A.P


Fig.39, Upper Ahobilam, Kurnūl, A.P


Fig.40, Upper Ahobilam, Kurnūl, A.P


Fig.41, Tiruvaṇṇāmalai, TN


Fig.42, Lēpākśi A.P


Fig.43, Lēpākśi, A.P.

Mīṉanātha in a Dancing posture





Fig.44, Southern *gōpura*, Villianūr   Fig.45, Amman Shrine, Tiruvaṇṇāmalai, TN

GŌRAKṢANĀTHA



Fig.46, *Prakāra* Wall, Śrisailam, Āndhra Pradesh





Fig.47, *Mukhamaṇḍapa*, Nandi, KN   Fig.48, *Mukhamaṇḍapa*, Nandi, KN




Fig.49, Southern *Gōpura*, Villianūr, P Y **Fig.50, *Ardhamaṇḍapa*, Āvani, KN**




Fig.51, Lower Ahobilam, A.P **Fig.52, Brihadīśvara temple, Tañjāvūr,T N**





Fig.53, Tirukaḻukuṉṟam, TN **Fig.54 TirukaḻukuṉṟamTN** **Fig.55, Tirukaḻukuṉṟam TN**


Fig.56, Chauraṅgi, Nandi, KN


Fig. 57, Bhairava with Scorpion, Śrisailam


Fig.58, Ulsūr Somēśvara Temple KN


Fig.59, *Maṇḍapa* pillars, Lower Ahobilam,A.P

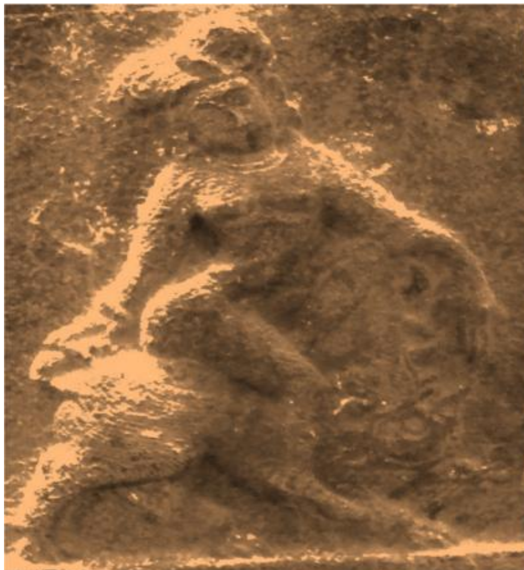

Fig.60, Vyālinātha, Bāhūr ,PY


Fig.61, Ulsūr Sōmēśvara Temple, KN



Fig.62, BhōgaNandīśvara Temple, Nandi, KN   Fig. 63, Śriraṅganātha Temple, TN



Fig.64, Villianūr Temple, PY   Fig.65, Villianūr Temple, PY



Fig.66, Kūrmanātha, Villianūr Temple, PY   Fig.67, Nāganātha, Villianūr Temple, PY




Fig.68, Nāganātha, Ulsūr Sōmēśvara, KN Fig.69, Nāganātha, Kalāsipālayam, KN





Fig.70 & 71, Varāhanātha, Bhōganandīśvara, Karnātaka Fig.72, Nandibeta,KN





Fig.73&74, Śriraṅgam Temple, TN Fig.75, Ucchipiḷḷaiyār Temple, TN





Fig.76 Tirukaḻukuṉṟam,TN Fig.77,Tirukōlūr,TN Fig.78, Tirukuruṅgudi,TN





Fig.79, Tiruvattāru, TN Fig.80 & 81, Virudhagirīśvara, Virudhāchalam, TN





Fig.82, Stucco images of Nāthas, Vīḻīnāthar Maṇḍapa Top, Tiruvīḻimiḻai, T.N

Images representing the performance of *Siṅganātha* Practices of Nātha-Siddhas


Fig.83 Bāhūr,PY


Fig.84, Kāñchi, TN


Fig.85, Lower Ahobilam, AP


Fig.86, Nandi, Karnātaka




Fig.87 & 88, Ulsūr, Karnātaka


Fig.89, Villianūr, PY


Fig.90, Virudhāchalam, TN

Representations of *Yōgic* Postures of the Siddhas and Nāthas in the Medieval Temples



Fig.91, Śrisailam,AP Fig.92, & 93, Nandi, Karnātaka



Fig.94, Nandi, Karnātaka Fig.95, Nandi, Karnātaka Fig.96, Nandibeta, Karnātaka

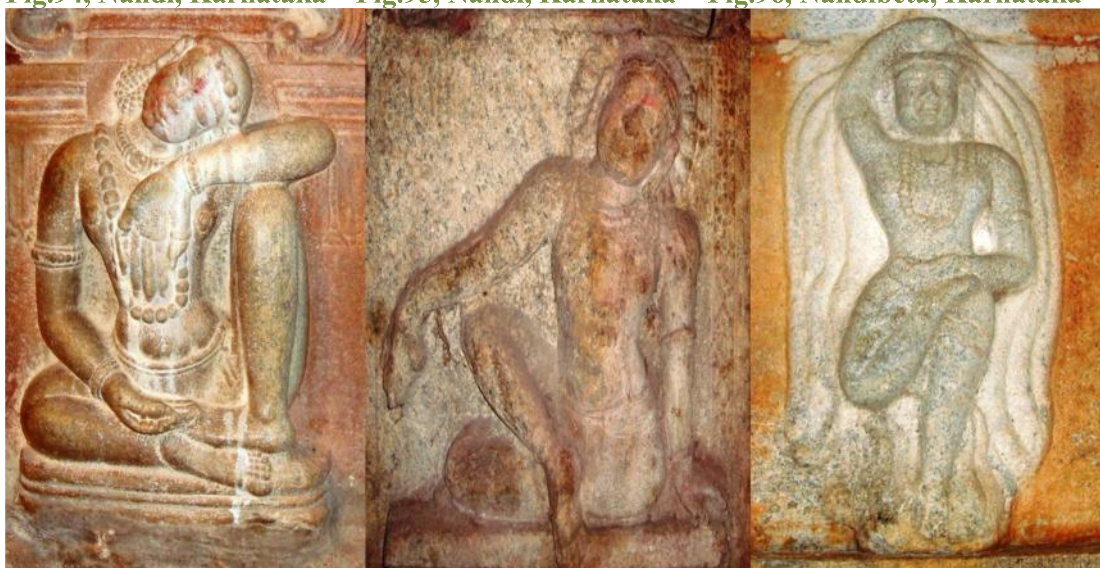


Fig.97, Āvani, Karnātaka Fig.98, Āvani, Karnātaka Fig.99, Āvani, Karnātaka





Fig.100, Bāhūr, PY **Fig.101 & 102, Lower Ahobilam, AP**



Fig.103 & 104, Lower Ahobilam, AP **Fig.105, Upper Ahobilam,AP**




Fig.106 & 107, Marakkāṇam,TN **Fig.108,Kāramadai ,TN**





Fig.109, Bangalore, KN Fig.110, Śriraṅgam,TN Fig.111, Śriraṅgam,TN





Fig.112, Tiruchy,TN Fig.113,Tiruchy,TN Fig.114, Tiruchy,TN





Fig.115,Tañjāvūr,TN Fig.116, Tiruvotṛiyūr,TN Fig.117,Villianūr,PY





Fig.118, Villianūr, PY Fig.119, Villianūr,PY Fig.120, Villianūr,PY





Fig.121, Villianūr,PY Fig.122, Virudhāchalam,TN Fig.123, Virudhāchalam,TN





Fig.124, Ulsūr,KN Fig.125, Ulsūr,KN Fig.126, Kalāsipāḷayam ,KN





Fig.127, Kalāsipāḷayam, KN Fig.128, Kalāsipāḷayam,KN Fig.129, Tiruvattāṛu,TN


Fig.130, Tiruvaṭṭāṛu,TN


Fig.131, Tiruvaṭṭāṛu,TN


Fig.132, Tiruvaṭṭāṛu,TN


Fig.133, Tiruvaṭṭāṛu,TN


Fig.134, Tiruvaṭṭāṛu,TN


Fig.135, Tiruvaṭṭāṛu,TN


Fig.136, Tiruvaṭṭāṛu,TN


Fig.137, Tiruvaṭṭāṛu,TN


Fig.138, Tiruvaṭṭāṛu,TN



Fig.139, Ceiling Beam, Puthumaṇḍapa, Tiruvotṛiyur, T.N

Ithyphallic Postures of Nāthas and Siddhas



Fig.140, Tiruvaṭṭāṛu Fig.141, Tiruvaṭṭāṛu Fig.142, Tiruvaṭṭāṛu, Fig.143, Tiruvaṭṭāṛu



Fig.144, Bāhūr,PY Fig.145,Sriraṅgam,TN Fig.146,Tirupathisāram Fig.147, Āranmula

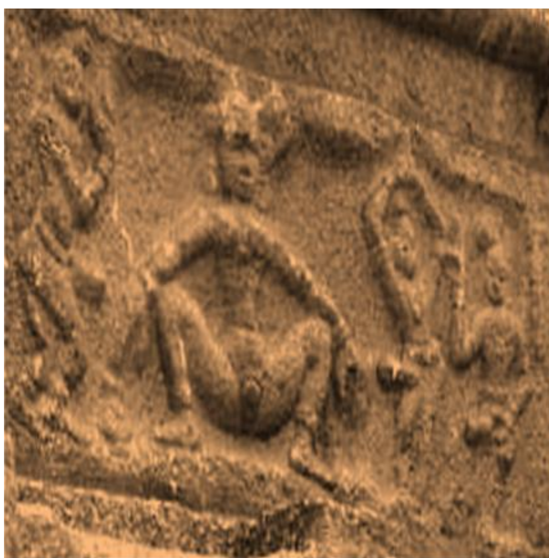



Fig.148, Śrisailam,A.P

Fig.149,Paṇdacōḻanallur, Puduchērry

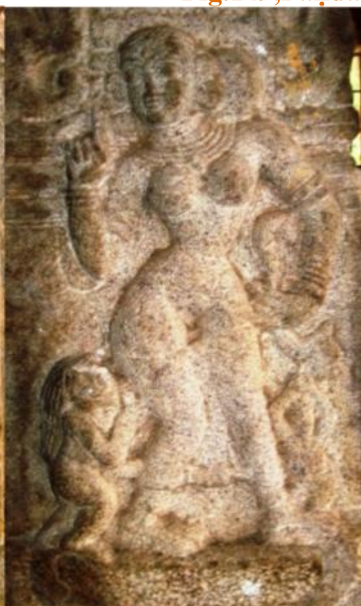




Fig.150,Kōte Veṅkatēśvara,KN

Fig.151,Śriraṅgam,TN,

Fig.152, Tiruvaṭṭāṛu,TN





Fig.153, Kāñchi,TN

Fig.154, Kāñchi ,TN

Fig.155,Kāñchi,TN



Fig.156,Tirukaḻukuṉṟam,TN;Fig.157, Tiruvotṛiyūr,TN Fig.158, Villianūr,Puduchērry



Fig.159,Tiruvaṇḍārkoil,Puduchērry



Fig.160,Tirumeyyam,TN





Fig.161, & 162 Tirukkaṇṇamaṅgai, Tamiḻnādu

DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

Fig. 1: This panel is found on the *prakāra* wall of the Mallikārjuna temple, Śrisailam, Āndhra Pradesh. It depict Mīṉanātha seated on a fish in a *paryaṅkāsana,* with matted hair, wearing big ear rings (*karṇakuṇḍala*); his right hand is resting on a staff (*yōga-daṇḍa*); his left hand is resting on the folded left knee in a *lōla-hasta* posture. Followed by Mīṉanātha, Gōrakṣanātha is depicted as also in a *paryaṅkāsana* on a tiger, which is in a striding posture. He is wearing big *karṇakuṇḍalas*, his right hand is resting on the back of the tiger and his left hand on the folded left knee in a *lōla-hasta* posture. Next to this, Chauraṅginātha is depicted as he was seated on a deer with his left leg folded and bound with *yōga-paṭṭa*. The left hand is in *abhaya mudrā* and the right hand is in *vyākarna mudrā*.

Fig. 2: This panel is also from the same temple as above, in which both Mīṉanātha and Bhairavanātha are depicted facing each other. Both are found with matted hair with a big *kuṇḍala* in their ears; cross bands from their shoulders; bangle like ornaments in their forearm and hand; and both are wearing *laṅgoti* (loin cloth) under their waist. Mīṉanātha wearing the *rudrākṣamāla* in his neck, his left hand in a *daṇḍa-hasta mudrā* posture is resting on the *yōga-daṇḍa* which is placed on the fish; his right hand is resting on the tail of the fish in a *katya valambita mudrā*; his left leg is folded and rested on the fish and his right leg is hanging in *lalitāsana* pose. Similarly, Bhairavanātha is also in a *lalitāsana* pose whose right leg is folded and resting on the scorpion and the left leg is hanging. He is wearing some necklace like ornament; his left hand in a *daṇḍa-hasta mudrā* posture resting on the *yōga-daṇḍa*, which is placed on the scorpion; his right leg is folded and resting on his right thigh.

Fig. 3: This panel is also found in the *prakāra* wall of Śrisailam temple, in which two Siddhas were depicted in different *yōgic* postures. First one is *kukutāsana*, as his both hands are resting in the ground and his legs are joined together as in *añjali* pose. On his long ears he is wearing big *kuṇḍalas*. The second one is in another *yōgic* posture called *Garbhāsana*, whose legs are bound with *yōga-paṭṭa*. His right leg is folded upward and resting in the ground and his left leg is folded and its foot is rested on the right knee. His chin is resting on his left hand palm. He is wearing cross bands, and bangle like rings are found on his wrists.

Fig. 4: This panel is also found in the *prakāra* wall of Śrisailam temple, in which two Siddhas are depicted in *yōgic* postures. First one is seated in a *padmāsana*. He is wearing a *laṅgōti*. His head is facing upwards, and supported with his right hand arm. His left hand is resting on a *yōga-daṇḍa*. Both his wrists are joined together in a *Gaṇēśa mudrā*. In the second one, he is seated folding his left leg, which is held thus with his right hand (*Bharadwājāsana*?); his left hand is hanging towards earth. His head is found with matted hair resting on the left leg knee. He is wearing necklace like ornament on his chest, bangle like rings on his wrist and a *laṅgoti* .

Fig. 5 to 13, are depicted on two pillars on either side of the (mukhamaṇḍapa) of the Jalakaṇṭēśwara temple in Kalāsipāḷayam, near Bangalore in Karnātaka, datable to late or post Vijayanagara period 16th – 17th century.

Fig. 5: Mīṉanātha seated on fish as his right hand is resting on his right leg knee and his left folded. His left hand is completely resting on the fish in a *katyavalambita mudrā*. He is wearing bangle like rings on his both arms and wrists and a thick necklace like ornament; a *yōga-daṇḍa* is placed behind his right hand knee, a wallet is tied in his left hand arm; he is having the matted hair and wearing big *karṇakuṇḍalas*.

Fig. 6: Gōrakṣanātha in *rājalīlāsana* on a tiger. His *kuṇḍala* are clearly visible hanging from his long ears. He is wearing necklace like ornament and a wallet is tied on his left arm. His left hand is resting on his left foot and his right hand is resting on the folded right leg knee.

Fig. 7: Chauraṅginātha seated comfortably, by hanging his legs freely on the caparisoned deer and riding it by holding the bridles/reins in his left hand which are tied to its mouth. A wallet is tied on his left arm, and bangle like rings are found on his both wrists and arms, big *kuṇḍalas* on his ears, and necklace like ornament are visible. He is depicted as holding the deer horn in his right hand as he is producing the *Siṅganātha* –'a roar of a lion'.

Fig. 8: Vyālinātha on a *Vyāli*, a mythical animal having elephant trunk, and lion's body. *Vyāli* is in a striding posture with its' trunk elevated upwards. His left hand is resting on the left knee in a *daṇḍa-hasta mudrā*. He is wearing big *karṇakuṇḍalas* and cross bands on his chest.

Fig. 9: A Nātha seated on a boar. His head tilted slightly upward; he is wearing the *karṇakuṇḍalas*, cross bands on his chest with a medallion and bangle like rings on his both arms and wrist. His right hand is resting on his right leg and left hand in *daṇḍa-hasta mudrā*, resting on the left knee.

Fig. 10: Nāganātha seated on a coiled snake raising its hood. He is facing slightly upward. His *kuṇḍala* in ears, rings in his wrists are clearly depicted. His right leg is folded and he is keeping his both hand on his left knee, on which he resting his chin.

Fig. 11: Bhairavanātha on a scorpion. He is wearing the *karṇakuṇḍalas*, cross band on his chest, along with a medallion. He is holding in his right hand a deer horn in his mouth. His left hand is resting on the toe of right leg, which is resting on the scorpion.

Fig.12: Kūrmanātha on a tortoise. His right leg is folded resting on the tortoise. His right hand is resting on his right leg. He is folded and resting his left hand on his left leg knee. Rings on his both wrists, cross bands on his chest, a loin cloth (*laṅgōti*) and *karṇakuṇḍalas* are clearly depicted.

Fig. 13: A Nātha on a striding lion. His head is slightly tilted upward. He is wearing *karṇakuṇḍalas*, cross bands on his chest, rings on his arms and wrists. He is wearing a *laṅgōti*. His right hand is resting on his right leg and his left leg is resting on his left knee.

From Fig.14 to Fig.22, the Navanāthas are depicted in the ardhamaṇḍapa wall of the Sōmēśvara temple at Ulsūr near Bangalore which belongs to the post Vijayanagara period, probably constructed by the Gowdas during 16th -17th century. All the nine Nāthas are depicted in a single line continuously along with their vehicles, from left to

right respectively tortoise, Vyāli, lion, fish, scorpion, deer, boar, snake and tiger which is the unique feature of this temple.

Fig.14: Kūrmanātha on a tortoise in *lalitāsana*. His head is resting on the right palm. His right leg is elevated and placed right thigh. His left hand is resting on the left leg, which is folded and resting on the tortoise. His hair is matted. He is wearing a cross-band and a necklace like ornament.

Fig.15: Vyālinātha in *rājalīlāsana* on a *Vyāli*, which is in a striding posture. In his right hand resting on the *Vyāli*, he is holding the deer horn close to his mouth. His left hand is in *lōla-hasta* pose resting on the left leg knee. His hair is matted and *karṇakuṇḍalas* are clearly depicted.

Fig.16: A Nātha on a lion in *rājalīāsana*. His right hand is resting on the right thigh in a *katya valambita mudrā* and his left hand is resting on the left knee in a *lōla-hasta mudrā*. His head is resting on his left shoulder.

Fig.17: Mīṉanātha on a fish. His right hand is resting on the fish in a *katya valambita mudrā*. His left palm is resting on the left knee. He is wearing a wallet on his left shoulder. A *trisūla* (trident) is placed behind him.

Fig.18: Bhairavanātha on a scorpion in *pariyaṅkāsana*. A trident is placed behind him. With his right hand, he is holding the deer horn in his mouth. His left hand is resting on the scorpion and a wallet is tied on his left shoulder. He is wearing big *kuṇḍalas,* a necklace like ornament, cross-bands and a medallion on his chest.

Fig.19: Nāganātha in *rājalīlāsana* on a snake whose hood is raised facing left. A wallet is shown on his left shoulder, and the left hand is resting on his left thigh in a *katya valambita mudrā* and his right hand is resting on his right knee. He is wearing rings on his arms and wrists. A deer horn tied to a band on his chest is clearly depicted.

Fig.20: Chauraṅginātha riding the deer in *lalitāsana* by holding its reins in his right hand and keeping a deer horn in his mouth with his right hand.

Fig.21: A Varāhanātha on a boar; his right hand is resting on the right knee and left hand resting on the boar in a *katya valambita mudrā*. He is wearing a wallet on his left shoulder and in both arms and wrists he is wearing the rings.

Fig.22: Gōrakṣanātha on a tiger. His head is tilted downward and resting on his hands which are resting on his right knee. His left leg is folded and resting on the tiger. He is wearing the *karṇakuṇḍalas* and rings on his wrists. A wallet is also visible on his left shoulder.

Fig.23: A panel from Śrisailam temple in which Mīṉanātha along with other Siddhas is depicted in *yōgic* postures. Mīṉanātha is on a fish in a *pariyaṅkāsana*. His right hand is resting on the fish and a wallet is tied at the shoulder. He is holding the *rudrākṣamāla*, *yōga-daṇḍa* and a *kamaṇdala* in his left hand. He is facing the other Siddhas on this panel. Next to him, the Gōrakṣa is on a tiger skin, in *padmāsana*. His hands are holding the *yōga-daṇḍa*, on which his head is resting. He is wearing *laṅgōti*, anklets, and bangle

like rings on his wrists. Next to him is a Siddha yogi with *laṅgōti* is depicted offering a deer horn to Gōrakṣa seated on the tiger skin. Another Siddha is depicted in a typical *Garbhāsana* pose as shown in Fig.3. His right leg is folded and resting in the ground, his left leg foot is resting on his right leg knee. His left hand is resting on the left leg knee, and his head is resting on his left hand palm. He is wearing a *rudrākṣamāla* in his neck and in his arms; and *kuṇḍalas* in his ears.

Fig. 24: This sculpture is found on the southern *gōpura* entrance of the Tirukāmēśvara temple at Villianūr, Puduchērry. In this Mīnanātha is seated on a fish in *lalitāsana* with his left leg hanging on the fish and his right leg is folded upward; his right hand is resting in a *daṇḍa-hasta mudrā*. His left hand is resting on the fish in a *katya valambita mudrā*. His hair is matted and long ears are visible. On his chest, he is wearing the deer horn as a medallion.

Fig.25: This panel is found on the *maṇḍapa* wall of the Nambirāya Perumal temple at Tirukuruṅgudi in Nāṅgunēri *tāluk* of Tirunelvēli Dist., Tamilnādu. Though the temple dates back to the Cōlā's times, this sculpture belongs to the post Vijayanagara or Nāyaka period. In this Mīnanātha is artistically shown seated on a fish in *ardha-paryaṅkāsana*. His matted hair, long ears with big *kuṇḍala* and a wallet hanging from his left shoulder are clearly depicted. A *yōga-paṭṭa* is shown holding the folded right knee to his waist. He is holding a *yōga-daṇḍa* with both hands on which he is resting his chin. His right hand is stretched resting on his right knee in a *katya valambita mudrā*. The fish is also depicted very typically with large teeth. Behind him a boat with two sailors and the captain with the saddle are shown.

Fig. 26: Mīnanātha (Mūlanātha temple at Bāhūr, Puduchērry) on a fish in an *ardha-paryaṅkāsana*. He is shown with matted hair, wearing *rudrākṣamāla*, a ring on his wrist and arms; left hand resting on the fish in a *katya valambita mudrā*, and he is holding an *ēka tāra vīna* (*kiñjuri*?) in his right hand.

Fig.27: Mīnanātha (Bōganandīśvara temple, Nandi village, Chikballapur dist., Karnātaka) on a fish in *lalitāsana*. His right hand is resting on the fish in a *katya valambita mudrā*, and his head is resting on the left hand palm. A medallion on his chest, rings in his arms and wrists, *karṇakuṇḍalas* are clearly depicted.

Fig.28: A rare, unique typical miniature sculpture of Mīnanātha (Yōganandīśvara temple, Nandibeta, Karnātaka) performing *ēka pāda sirisāsana* on a fish. He is holding the staff in his left hand and his right leg is on his back of the neck. His left leg is holding the *yōga-daṇḍa* and the left foot is held by his right hand. A medallion of deer horn is on his chest.

Fig.29: Mīnanātha (Paṭṭināthar temple, Paṭṭīsvaram, Kumbakōṇam dist., Tamilnādu). In the *kudus* found on the *adhistāna* of this temple, many miniature sculptures are depicted with different *yōgic* postures. Of which, an image of Mīnanātha is depicted in *rājalīlāsana*. He is carrying the *ēka-tāra vīna* (*kiñjuri*?) in his both hands. He is wearing *karṇakuṇḍalas*; rings on his wrists and ankles.

Fig.30: Mīṉanātha (Paṭṭināthar temple, Paṭṭīsvaram, Kumbakōṇam dist., Tamiḻnādu) in *Lalitāsana*. In his right hand he is holding a fly whisk and his left hand is in *katya valambita mudrā* resting on his left knee which is folded and elevated upward. His matted hair, *kuṇḍalas* in ears, rings on hands, anklets, and *laṅgōti* are clearly depicted.

Fig.31: Mīṉanātha (Bhumīśvara-mudaiyār temple, Marakāṇam, Tamiḻnādu) on a fish in *ardha-matśyēndrāsana*. His left leg is tied with a *yōga-paṭṭa* with his hip. His right hand is resting in *daṇḍa-hasta mudrā* and his left hand is on the fish in a *katya valambita mudrā*. He is wearing the rings in his arms and wrists. His matted hair and *kuṇḍalas* are clearly depicted. He is wearing *rudrākṣamāla* in his neck. Some more sculptures in different *asanas* are also found in this temple.

Fig.32: Mīṉanātha (Brahadīśvara temple, Tañjāvūr, Tamiḻnādu) seated facing upward in *ardha-matśyēndrāsana*. He is shown with a beard and long matted hair locks. Big *karṇakuṇḍalas,* rings on his arms and wrists, and a *yōga-paṭṭa* tied to his left knee are clearly visible. His right hand is resting on the fish in a *katya valambita mudrā* and his left hand is resting on the left knee in a *daṇḍa-hasta mudrā*.

Fig.33: Mīṉanātha (Ēkāmparanātha temple, Kāñchipuram, Tamiḻnādu) in *ardha-matśyēndrāsana* is artistically depicted with his appendages like long matted hair, rings on his arms and wrists, a wallet on his left shoulder, large *kuṇḍalas*, etc. On his thigh, a small *yōga-daṇḍa* is placed on which his right hand is resting in a *daṇḍa-hasta mudrā*. Fish is also depicted in an artistic way.

Fig.34: Mīṉanātha (Kāmātchi Amman temple, Kāñcipuram,Tamiḻnādu) in a *ardhamatśyēndrāsana* pose with his left leg folded upward and his left hand resting on his left knee in *daṇḍa-hasta mudrā*. His right hand is resting on his folded right leg. His matted hair, *kuṇḍalas* and rings on arms and wrists are clearly visible. Fish is also depicted in small size.

Fig.35: Mīṉanātha (Sōmēśvara temple, Ulsūr, Karnātaka) in *ardhamatśyēndra* pose. His right hand is resting on his right knee and his left hand is resting on the fish in a *katya valambita mudrā*. His matted hair, *kuṇḍalas*, rings on his arms, ornament in his neck are clearly visible. Similarly sculptures of this kind are also found in other pillars of this *maṇḍapa*.

Fig.36: Mīṉanātha (Kōte Veṅkatēśvara temple, Tipu Palace, Bangalore, Karnātaka) in *ēka pāda sirisāsana* in which his right leg folded back and resting on his neck and his right hand is placed on the fish in a *katya valambita mudrā*. His left leg folded towards his right leg and locked in the gap between his right arm and right leg thigh. And his left hand is holding strongly his left leg. His long matted hair, *kuṇḍalas*, rings in arms, wrists and anklet are clearly depicted.

Fig.37: Mīṉanātha (Lower Ahobilam, Kurnūl dist., Āndhra Pradesh) in *ardhamatśyēndrāsana*. His hairdo, *kuṇḍalas*, medallion on his chest and his face are sculpted beautifully. His right hand is resting on the folded right knee in a *daṇḍa-hasta mudrā* and his left hand is placed on his left thigh in a stylistic way.

Fig.38: Mīṉanātha (Lower Ahobilam, Kurnūl dist., Āndhra Pradesh) on the *adhistāna* of the *vāhana maṇḍapa* along with other Nātha-Siddhas like Gōrakṣa. He is seated on a long fish in an *ardhapadmāsana* pose. He is wearing a thick sacred thread in his neck, tied with a pendent. He is holding a *saṅkha* (horn deer?) like instrument in his right hand and his left hand is resting on his left thigh.

Fig.39: Mīṉanātha (Upper Ahobilam, Kurnūl dist., Āndhra Pradesh) in *ardhamatśyēndrāsana* depicted artistically with all his appendages like a medallion on his chest, a wallet on his shoulder, a *laṅgōti*, *karṇakuṇḍalas*, etc. On his left thigh, a *yōga-daṇḍa* is placed on which his left hand is in a *lōla-hasta* pose. His head is tilted towards right and resting in his right palm. His hairdo is a typical Vijayanagara coiffure style.

Fig.40: One of the most exquisite and elegant depictions of Mīṉanātha (Upper Ahobilam, Kurnūl dist. Āndhra Pradesh) in *rājalīlāsana* pose with his head looking upward. His hairdo, *kuṇḍalas*, a wallet in his right hand arm, rings in his arms and wrists, anklets, *yōga-paṭṭa* tied between his hip and left leg, right hand resting on the *yōga-daṇḍa*, are all beautifully depicted. His left hand is resting on his left knee in *daṇḍa-hasta mudrā*.

Fig. 41: Mīṉanātha (Amman temple, Tiruvaṇṇāmalai, Tamiḻnādu) depicted with a tonsured head. He is wearing a patched garment in his neck, rings on arms and wrists, anklet in his leg, *kuṇḍalas* in his ears, *yōga-paṭṭa* in his hip tied with his left leg, left hand resting on left knee and right hand resting on right thigh are the common features. A halo (*prabhamaṇḍala*) is shown around the head.

Fig. 42: Mīṉanātha (Vīrabhadra temple, Lēpākṣi, Ananthpur dist., Āndhra Pradesh) seated on a fish. His matted hair, medallion, wallet, *kuṇḍalas* are clearly visible. His right leg is lying on the fish and on folded left leg he is keeping both his hands. Among the Navanāthas, only the sculptures of Mīṉanātha in different postures are found on many pillars of this temple.

Fig.43: Very rare representation of Mīṉanātha (Vīrabhadra temple, Lēpākṣi, Ananthpur dist., Āndhra Pradesh) in a swaying pose; seated on a fish in *ardhapadmāsana* and his body and head bends towards his left along with his both hands raised above his head as he is clapping and dancing.

Fig.44: Mīṉanātha (Tirukāmēśvarar temple, Villiaṉūr, Puduchērry) in *tribhaṅga* pose as he is dancing on a fish holding a *ēka tāra vīna* (*kiñjuri*?) in his hand, along with all other his above said appendages like *laṅgōti*, ear-rings, etc.

Fig.45: Mīṉanātha (Aruṇāchalēśvara temple, Tiruvaṇṇamalai, Tamiḻnādu) in a rare dancing posture. In this, all other his appendages like rings on his arms and wrists, medallion on his chest, cross bands, *laṅgōti*, matted hair, *kuṇḍalas*, etc. are clearly depicted.

Fig.46: Gōrakṣanātha (Śrisailam, Kurnūl dist., Āndhra Pradesh) seated on a tiger shown with the appendages like big *kuṇḍalas*, cross bands and medallion, *rudrākṣamāla* on his chest, rings on his arms and wrists, matted hair, etc. His right hand in *daṇḍa-hasta mudrā* is resting on his right knee and his left hand and left leg are resting on the back of the

tiger. Opposite to Gōrakṣa, a Siddha is seated on a *yōga-daṇḍa* in *padmāsana* with both hands resting on his thighs. He is also wearing the appendages like the Gōrakṣa as said above; under him a *kamaṇḍala* is placed. Their background indicates that they are meditating in the forest.

Fig.47: Gōrakṣanātha (Bōganandīśvara temple, Nandi, Karanātaka) in *ardhapadmāsana*. His right hand is resting on the right knee in a *katya valambita mudrā* and the left hand and left leg on the tiger's back in *daṇḍa hasta mudrā*. He is wearing *kuṇḍalas*, rings on arms and wrists, anklets on his legs.

Fig.48: Gōrakṣanātha (Bōganandīśvara temple, Nandi, Karanātaka) is wearing a medallion in his chest. Other characteristic features as seen in Fig.47 are also shown here.

Fig.49: Gōrakṣanātha (Tirukāmēśvarar temple, Villianūr, Puduchērry) seated on a striding tiger. He is wearing *yōga-paṭṭa* in his left leg and other similar appendages like Mīṉanātha, which is also depicted at the same place. His left hand is resting on the left knee and his right hand is resting on his right thigh in a *katya valambita mudrā*.

Fig.50: Gōrakṣanātha (Rāmaliṅgēśvara temple, Āvani, Karnātaka) is shown here with his right leg hanging on the tiger and left leg is folded and placed on the back of the tiger; his left hand is resting on his left knee in a *daṇḍa-hasta* pose. In his right hand, he is holding a fly whisk like ornament. Many similar sculptures of Gōrakṣa are also found in the same *maṇḍapa*.

Fig.51: Gōrakṣanātha (Lower Ahobilam, Kurnūl dist., Āndhra Pradesh) is shown with long *kuṇḍalas* on his ears, medallion on his chest. His head is shown resting in his left palm; his right hand is resting on his right thigh in a *katya valambita mudrā*.

Fig. 52: Gōrakṣanātha (Brahadīśvara temple, Tañjāvūr, Tamiḻnādu) in *lalitāsana*. His right hand is in *daṇḍa-hasta mudrā*, resting on his right knee and his left hand is resting on a *yōga-daṇḍa*, which is placed on his left high. He is wearing a *laṅgōti*, big *kuṇḍalas*, medallion on his chest, rings on his arms and wrists; and anklets on his legs.

Fig. 53: Gōrakṣanātha (Tirukaḻukuṉṟam temple, Chengulpet dist., Tamiḻnādu) in *rājalīlāsana*. His right hand is resting on the right knee in a *katya valambita mudrā* and the left hand and left leg on the tiger's back in *daṇḍa hasta mudrā*. He is wearing *kuṇḍalas*, rings on arms and wrists, anklets on his legs.

Fig.54: Gōrakṣanātha (Tirukaḻukuṉṟam temple, near Chennai, Tamiḻnādu) in *lalithāsana*. Unlike other sculptures, in this, tiger is facing left, while in all other sculptures it is facing. His matted hair is beautifully shown in the form of flaring flames, *karṇakuṇḍalas*, deer horn as a medallion, *yōga-paṭṭa* holding the folded left leg tied to the waist; a *laṅgōti*, anklets, a wallet on his shoulder are clearly depicted.

Fig.55: Gōrakṣanātha (Tirukaḻukuṉṟam temple, Chengulpet dist., Tamiḻnādu) with his left hand in *abhayamudrā* and his right hand is in *daṇḍa-hasta mudrā* resting on his right knee in a *rājalīlāsana*. His matted hair, *kuṇḍala*, and ornaments in his neck are clearly depicted.

Fig.56: Chauraṅginātha (Bhōganandīśvara temple, Nandi, Karnātaka) riding the deer. His right hand is in *varada mudrā* and his left hand holding the reins of the deer. Anklet is shown on his left leg; rings in his wrists, *kuṇḍalas* on his ears, a shaft like object behind him are clearly seen.

Fig.57: Bhairava (Śrisailam, Kurnūl dist., Āndhra Pradesh) on a rounded block of stone on the top of the *prakāra* wall, in which along with all of his appendages, a scorpion is depicted under his feet; as scorpion being the *lānchana* of Lord Bhairava. Scorpion under feet of the Bhairava is also found in a dilapidated sculpture at Mūlanātha temple in Bāhūr.

Fig. 58: Bhairavanātha (Sōmēśvara temple, Ulsūr, Karnātaka) in a *padmāsana* on a scorpion. Both hands are resting on his thighs. His matted hairs, *karṇakuṇḍalas*, medallion on his chest are clearly depicted. Similar other sculpture is also found in the same temple as well as in Kalāsipāḷayam, Viriñjipuram near Vellore of Tamiḻnādu, etc.

Fig.59: Bhairavanātha (Lower Ahobilam, Kurnūl dist., Āndhra Pradesh) on the *vāhana maṇḍapa* pillar. Seated on a scorpion in a *tribhaṅga* pose, with his right leg bent upward on which his right hand is resting and he is keeping his left leg. He is slightly turned towards his right side, his *karṇakuṇḍalas*, big medallion on chest, *laṅgōti* under his waist are clearly depicted.

Fig.60: Vyālinātha (Mūlanātha temple, Bāhūr, Puduchērry) seated on a *Vyāli*. His hairdo is in typical Chāḷukyan style. His right hand is in *katya valambita mudrā* resting on the tail/back of the *Vyāli* and his left hand on its head. Necklace like ornament on chest, big *karṇakuṇḍalas*, rings on his wrists are clearly depicted. In all other later examples, the *Vyāli* is facing right, but in this example it is facing left.

Fig.61: Vyālinātha (Sōmēśvara temple, Ulsūr, Karnātaka) in *ardhapariyaṅkāsana* pose. The *Vyāli* is facing right and his right hand is probably placed on the *Vyāli's* mouth/trunk. His left hand is resting on his left knee, which is resting on the *Vyāli*. The general appendages of other *Navanāthas* are also found in him.

Fig.62: Vyālinātha (Bhōganandīśvara temple, Nandi, Karnātaka) seated on a striding *Vyāli* in *ardha-matśyēndrāsana*. His left hand is folded and resting on the left knee, which is already folded upward and footed on *Vyāli*. His right hand is unfolded as he is showing his palm in a *hamsapakśa mudrā*. His head is slightly bent towards left. His matted hair, big *kuṇḍalas*, deer horn as a medallion on his chest tied in a thick woollen like thread, rings on his arms and wrists are clearly depicted.

Fig.63: Vyālinātha (Amman shrine, Raṅganātha temple, Śriraṅgam, Tamiḻnādu). It is similar to Fig.62 in all the features and *mudrās*.

Fig.64: Vyālinātha (Tirukāmēśvarar Temple, Villiaṉūr, Puduchērry) is having long matted hair, which also covered his ears. He is wearing a *laṅgōti* and cross belts on his chests. His right leg is hanging down and the left leg is folded upward on the back of the *Vyāli*. He is holding a flag like attribute in his right hand and his left hand is resting on the left knee in *lōla-hastamudra.* A wallet on his left shoulder is also visible.

Fig.65: Vyālinātha (Tirukāmēśvarar Temple, Villianūr, Puduchērry). In this *Vyāli* is clearly depicted as it is fierce fully striding, by opening its mouth and showing its big teeth. He is seated on it as in Fig.63. He is wearing *laṅgōti*, holding a fly whisk in his right hand and his left hand is resting on the back of the *Vyāli* in a *katyavalambita mudrā*. His matted hair, big ear rings, necklace like ornament, medallion of deer horn, rings on his wrists, a wallet on his left shoulder are clearly depicted.

Fig.66: Kūrmanātha (Tirukāmēśvarar Temple, Villianūr, Puduchērry) in *ardha-padmāsana* pose. His right hand is resting on his right thigh and his left hand is resting on the left knee, which is already folded upward. A wallet is hanging on his left shoulder. He is wearing ornaments like necklaces, medallion, rings on his wrists and arms, *kuṇḍala* on ears, loin cloth, etc. His hair is also matted. Kūrmanātha representations are very rare in the Vijayanagara sculptural art.

Fig.67: Nāganātha (Tirukāmēsvarar Temple, Villianūr, Puduchērry) is seated on an elevated place and under his foot a snake is depicted with its raising hood. All the characteristic Nātha appendages are shown: matted hair, big *kuṇḍalas*, necklace like ornament, deer horn medallion, rings on his wrists and *laṅgōti*. A *yōga-daṇḍa* is placed on a tail of the snake, on which Nāganātha resting his left hand and his right hand in *daṇḍa-hasta mudrā* is resting on his folded right knee.

Fig.68: Nāganātha (Sōmēśvara temple, Ulsūr, Karnātaka) in a *Paraṅkāsana* on a folded snake which is raising its hood. His left leg is resting on his folded right leg. His left hand is resting on the snake in a *katya valambita mudrā* and his right hand is on his left knee in a *lōla-hasta mudrā*. His *laṅgōti*, *kuṇḍala*, matted hair, wallet on his left shoulder and cross bands on his chest are clearly visible.

Fig.69: Nāganātha (Jalakaṇtēśvara temple, Kalāsipāḷayam, Karnātaka) is holding the snake in his left hand in an *Upavesāsana* (squatting position) instead of seated on it; and a wallet is hanging on his right hand which is already in *chin mudrā*. His matted hair, *kuṇḍalas*, thick woollen cross bands are purposefully shown.

Fig.70: Varāhanātha (Bhōganandīśvara temple, Nandi, Karnātaka) in *lalitāsana* on a boar, similar to Vyālinātha (Fig.62) found in this temple. His right hand is in a *chinmudrā* and his left hand is in *daṇḍa-hasta mudrā*. A long cross band on his left shoulder, a big medallion in his neck, *kuṇḍala* in his ears, rings on his wrists and arms, and anklets on his legs are clearly depicted.

Fig.71: Varāhanātha (Bhōganandīśvara temple, Nandi, Karnātaka) standing in a *Vrkśāsana* pose, by holding right toe on the earth and his folded left leg resting on the right thigh. His both hands are raised above his head in *añjali mudrā*. He is having a long beard and long hairlocks on his head. A boar is depicted standing behind him. Usually in the examples of Nandi, Ulsūr and Kalāsipāḷayam, Varāhanātha is depicted as seated on a boar. But in this and all other sculptures in Tamil region, this Nātha is depicted in *Vrkśāsana* pose.

Fig.72: Varāhanātha (Yōganandīśvara temple, Nandibeta, Karnātaka) in *Vrkśāsana*: standing on his left toe and folding his right leg upward to his naval and holding it with

his left hand. He is holding his right hand on his head. He is shown with beard and long hair and a boar is standing behind him. Unlike other examples, he is found with female attendants on his either sides holding fly whisks (*cāmara*) in their hands and their coiffure is in typical Nāyaka style.

Fig.73: Varāhanātha (Śriraṅgam temple, Śriraṅgam, Tamiḻnādu) is in *Vrkśāsana* pose, standing on his left leg in *añjali mudrā* and his right leg is folded towards his left knee. He is wearing a loin cloth, rings on his arms and wrists and found with a short beard. A small boar is standing behind him. His hairdo is in typical Chāḷukyan style.

Fig.74: Varāhanātha (Srirangam temple, Srirangam, Tamiḻnādu) is shown as an old man and having a long hair flowing down in locks on the shoulders. He is standing in his left leg in usual *Vrkśāsana* pose. His right leg is folded and placed on his left thigh. A boar is standing behind him. A long wallet is shown from the left shoulder.

Fig.75: Varāhanātha (Ucchipiḷḷaiyār temple, Trichy, Tamiḻnādu). This is almost similar to the one shown in fig.74. However, a *rudrākṣamāla* in his neck and a *laṅgōti* in his under waist are clearly depicted.

Fig.76: A Siddha (Tirukaḻukuṉṟam Murugaṉ temple, Chengelpet, Tamiḻnādu) is shown with a frail body the ribcage and its bones are visible. He is standing on his right toe and his left leg is folded towards his naval. He is holding his hands above the head with both index fingers locked together. He is depicted with beard and a long hair on his back. A boar is standing to his right side.

Fig.77: A Siddha (Tirukōlūr Viṣṇu temple, south Tamiḻnādu) is standing in usual *Vrkśāsana* pose on his left leg and his right leg is folded to his left thigh. His hands are raised above his head in *añjali mudrā*. He is having a beard and a long hair which is hanging back from his head. He is wearing a *dothi* on his waist. Big *karṇakuṇḍalas*, rings on his arms and wrists, and a boar behind him are shown.

Fig.78: Varāhanātha (Tirukuruṅgudi, Tirunelvēli dist., Tamiḻnādu) is found in a separate miniature shrine in the niche, indicating his important place probably as the *varāha* incarnation of Viṣṇu. (In the same temple Mīṉanātha is depicted in a very artistically. See Fig.25).

Fig.79: Varāhanātha (Tiruvattāṟu, Kaṉṉiyākumari dist., Tamiḻnādu). Nearly 2300 sculptures of different kinds are found on the outer *prakāra* pillars of this temple and one doesn't resemble the other. Among these, more than twenty sculptures of Varāhanātha are found. In this sculpture, Varāhanātha is depicted as standing in a *Vrkśāsana* pose on his right leg and his left leg is folded upward to his left thigh. His hands are raised above his head in *añjali mudrā*. He is wearing a *laṅgōti* and long hair in his head. Behind him a boar is placed and above him an *Aṣtatala Padmā* is depicted.

Fig. 80: Varāhanātha (Virudhāchalam, Cuddalore dist., Tamiḻnādu) is in a *Vrkśāsana* pose standing on his right leg and his left leg is folded upward to his right thigh. He is wearing a *laṅgōti* and having long hair. His hands are raised above his head in *añjali*

mudrā. A boar is standing behind him. There are numerous similar sculptures of Varāhanātha in this temple.

Fig.81: Varāhanātha (Virudhāchalam, Cuddalore dist., Tamiḻnādu) meditating in a forest, where a tree and a hunter are also depicted in distance. He is in *Vrkśāsana* pose standing on his right leg and his left leg is folded and placed in his right thigh. His hands raised above his head in *añjali mudrā*. A boar is standing behind him. Here the shape of the tree is depicted to show the resemblance of the shape of the Siddha in his *Vrkśāsana* pose.

Fig.82: Natha Siddhas in Stucco (Tiruvīḻimiḻalai, Kumbakōṇam dist., Tamiḻnādu). These stucco sculptures are on the top of a *maṇḍapa* in the Vīḻīnātha temple. Three Nātha-Siddhas are shown seated on their respective vehicles. Unlike other examples, here a Nātha is seated on a bull in a *rājalīlāsana* pose. He is wearing the sacred thread, rings on his arms, necklace like ornaments with a medallion in his neck and anklets on his legs. He is having beard and knotted hair. His left hand is resting on the bull's back in a *katya valambita mudra* (?) and his right hand is in *daṇḍa-hasta mudrā*. Next to this, is a Nātha is seated on a lion. He is wearing *yōga-paṭṭa* on his both legs tied to his hip, and both hands are rested on respective knees in a *daṇḍa-hasta mudrā*. He is also wearing rings on his arms, beard and knotted hair on his head. Next to this, is the stucco image of Mīṉanātha. He is wearing a loin cloth and seated on a fish in a *rājalīlāsana* pose. His right hand is resting on his right thigh in a *katya valambita mudrā* and his left hand is on his up-folded left leg knee. He is also wearing the rings on his wrists, anklets. These stucco sculptures shows the continuity of the Nātha tradition in this region.

(From Fig. 83 to Fig. 90 are the images representing the performance of Siṅganātha practice of the Nātha-Siddhas)

Fig. 83: This sculpture is found in a *ardhamaṇḍapa* pillar of Bāhūr Śri Mūlanātha temple in which a Nātha-Siddha is shown blowing the deer horn. He is standing in a striding posture and slightly bent forward; with both of his hands he is holding the deer horn in his mouth. He is wearing big *kuṇḍalas*, rings on his wrists, anklets on his legs, cross bands on his chest and *laṅgōti*, etc.

Fig. 84: This sculpture is found in a *maṇḍapa* pillar of Kāmātchi Amman temple at Kāñcipuram. A *Nāthapanthi* is standing erect and holding the deer horn in his right hand to its mouth and his left hand is hanging in a *lōla-hastamudra*. He is also found with wearing the appendages like other Nātha-Siddhas, viz., matted hair, big *kuṇḍala*, and rings in arms and wrists, cross bands and medallion. But instead of *laṅgōti*, it seems to be a patched garment.

Fig. 85: This sculpture is found in the *adhistāna* of the *vāhana maṇḍapa* of the Lower Ahobilam temple in the Kurnūl dist. of Āndhra Pradesh. He is standing in a *tribhaṅga* pose, whose left leg is striding forward and left hand is holding the deer horn to his mouth. His right leg bent slightly and his right hand is placed on his right thigh. His hairdo, *kuṇḍala*, medallion, *laṅgōti* are clearly depicted, even though his face is not clearly visible due to the structure of the stone it made up of.

Fig.86: This sculpture is found in the *mukhamaṇḍapa* pillar of the Bhōganandīśvara temple in Karnātaka, in which the Nātha-Siddha is in a *tribhaṅga* pose striding and facing towards right. He is holding the deer horn in his left hand to his mouth and his right hand is bent upwards. His left leg is bent forward and his right leg bent backward. His matted hair, necklace like ornament, rings on his wrists, *kuṇḍala* and *laṅgōti* are clearly depicted. Many other sculptures of the same kind are found in this temple.

Fig.87: This sculpture is found in the *mukhamaṇḍapa* pillar of the Sōmēśvara temple at Ulsūr, Karnātaka. A Nāthapanthi seated in a squatting pose in *Upavesāsana* and holding the deer horn in his right hand to his mouth. His left hand is resting on his left leg.His matted hairs, *kuṇḍala*, necklace like ornament; rings on his wrists, anklets, *laṅgōti* are clearly depicted. He is also depicted with big belly.

Fig.88: In another sculpture found in the *mukhamaṇḍapa* of the Sōmēśvara temple, an Nātha-Siddha in a *tribhaṅga* pose, holding the deer horn in his both hands to his mouth. Both his legs are slightly bent down. His hairdo, long *kuṇḍala*, rings in wrists, anklets and *laṅgōti* are clearly visible.

Fig. 89: This sculpture is found on a top relief of an *ardhamaṇḍapa* pillar of Villiaṉūr temple, in which an Nātha-Siddha holding a deer horn in his mouth with both hands towards right side. His matted hair, *kuṇḍala*, rings in his wrists and arms; anklets are engraved clearly. Many sculptures of this similar kind are also found in other parts of this temple.

Fig. 90: This sculpture is found in the eastern *maṇḍapa* pillar of the Viruthagirīśvara temple at Virudhāchalam of Tamiḻnādu. He is found with a similar pose found in Villiaṉūr temple (Fig.89). This *maṇḍapa* belongs to the post Vijayanagara period. Rounded matted hair, *kuṇḍala*, cross bands, rings in wrists; patched garments in his under waist are clearly depicted. Besides above, similar sculptures are also found in almost all medieval temples of Karnātaka, Āndhra Pradesh and Tamiḻnādu.

Fig. 91: This sculpture is found on the *prakāra* wall of Śrisailam temple. A Siddha is depicted as seated on a long *yōga-daṇḍa* in a *padmāsana* pose and his head and body is fully bent towards his right side. His both hands are raised and joined together in *añjali mudrā*. His matted hair and big *kuṇḍala*, a wallet in his left arm are clearly visible. Besides, a tree and under him, two monkeys are shown to depict the forest scenery.

Fig. 92: This sculpture found in the *mukhamaṇḍapa* pillar of the Bhōganandīśvara temple at Karnātaka. He is seated in an *ardha-padmāsana* pose, as his right left is folded upward. His left hand is resting on his left thigh. His right hand is on his right leg knee and his face is resting on his right hand palm. His matted hair, big medallion in his chest, rings in his wrists and arms, anklets in his legs are clearly depicted.

Fig. 93: This sculpture is found in the same *maṇḍapa* of Nandi temple in which he is depicted seated in *ardha-padmāsana* pose with his left leg slightly elevated upward and both body and head bent towards his left. His both hands raised above his head in *añjali mudrā*. A wallet in right shoulder, a deer horn medallion in his chest with cross bands, *laṅgōti*, rings in his wrists and arms; and anklets in his legs are depicted clearly and

purposefully. Many similar sculptures of this kind is also found in other pillars of this temple, as well as other temples of south India like, Śrisailam, Hazara Rāma temple at Hampi and other temples of Tamiḻnādu, Karnātaka and Āndhra Pradesh.

Fig. 94: This sculpture is also found in the same temple in which he is seated in *ardha-padmāsana* pose as his left leg raised upward. His left land is in his left leg knee and his right hand is raised upward in a *hamsapakśa mudrā* as his palm opened. He is found with tonsured head, big *kuṇḍala*, and medallion on his chest, rings on his arms and wrists, anklets on his legs and *laṅgōti* are depicted.

Fig. 95: In this sculpture, in the *mukhamaṇḍapa* pillar of Nandi temple, a *Nāthapanthi* is depicted in *ardha-padmāsana* pose as his left leg folded upward in which his left hand is resting in a *daṇḍa-hasta mudrā* and his right hand is resting on his right thigh in a *katya valambita mudrā*. His matted hair, *kuṇḍala*, necklace like ornament with medallion, rings in his arms and wrists, anklets in his legs are clearly sculpted.

Fig. 96: This sculpture is found on the bottom of a pillar in the *ardhamaṇḍapa* of Yōganandīśvara temple at Nandibeta in Karnātaka. He is seated in *padmāsana*. He is holding a *yōga-daṇḍa* placed in front of him, in his left hand and keeping his right hand on the top of it and resting his chin. He is having a big bunch of matted hair folded on either side of his head. He is wearing big *kuṇḍala* patched garment in his shoulder, rings in his arms and wrists and anklet in his legs.

Fig. 97: This sculpture is found in a pillar of Rāmaliṅgēśvara temple at Āvani of Karnātaka. A Siddha is found with a tonsured head. He is seated in an *ardha-padmāsana* pose as his left leg folded upward and he is holding his left hand on its knee in a *lōla-hasta mudrā*, and his head is bent towards left and resting on the left hand. His right hand is in a *kaṅgula (dhyāni) mudrā*, resting in his right foot. He is wearing a *rudrākṣamāla* around his head, and a big one is hanging from his shoulder to stomach. He is also wearing a necklace like ornament; a big ring like ornament in his wrists and arms, his *laṅgōti* is also clearly depicted. But instead of usual ear-ring (*kuṇḍala*), the ear lobe in him is looking differently in a big size *rudrākṣa* seeds.

Fig. 98: This sculpture is found in one of the sanctum pillar of the Rāmaliṅgēśvara temple at Āvani. He is seated in a *paryaṅkāsana* pose, whose right leg is folded and placed upon his left leg. His left hand is resting down in a *katya valambita mudrā* and his right hand is resting in a *daṇḍa-hasta* pose on his right leg knee. His face is slightly lifted upward. His matted hair, big *kuṇḍalas*, necklace like ornament, medallion on his chest, rings on his arms and wrists are depicted as the common features of the *Nāthapanthis*.

Fig. 99: This sculpture is found on the outer wall of the *ardhamaṇḍapa* of Āvani temple. He is standing in a *Vrkśāsana* pose in his left leg and his right leg is folded and resting on his left thigh. His left hand is placed on the right leg foot in a *dhyāni/kaṅgula mudrā*, and his right hand is placed on the top of his head. He is depicted with long hair which is hanging broadly up to the ground from his head. Big *kuṇḍala*, medallion and *rudrākṣmāla* in his chest, rings on his arms are also depicted.

Fig. 100: This sculpture is found in the *ardhamaṇḍapa* pillar of Bāhūr temple, in which a Siddha is seated in a squatting pose. His both legs are crossed together in *svastikāsana* and tied with the *yōga-paṭṭa*. Both his hands are hanging in *daṇḍa-hasta mudrā* and resting in his respective knees. He is depicted with a matted hair, beard, rings on his arms and wrists.

Fig. 101: This sculpture is found in a small *kudu* of an *adhistāna* in the Lower Ahobilam temple. It is less than one feet in its height. He is seated in a *padmāsana* pose. His both hands are resting on a *yōga-daṇḍa*, which is placed in his front, and on that his chin is also resting. He is found with tonsured head and his long *kuṇḍalas* and a ring on his wrists are clearly visible.

Fig. 102: Another miniature sculpture is found in the same row of the above temple (Fig.101), in which he is seated in a *svastikāsana* pose. His both legs are tied with *yōga-paṭṭa*, and he is holding those legs with his respective hands. His matted hair, long *kuṇḍala*, thick rings on his arms, deer horn medallion on his chest is clearly depicted in it.

Fig. 103: This sculpture is found on the pillar relief of the Lower Ahobilam temple, which is found similar to the Fig.101. But in this, the *yōga-daṇḍa* is placed on his foot, he is having big *kuṇḍala*, his head is with a knotted hairdo and a *kamaṇḍala* is also placed besides his left hand.

Fig. 104: This is found in another pillar relief of the Lower Ahobilam temple. He is seated in an *ardha-padmāsana* pose, facing towards his left. His left leg is folded upward and his left hand is resting on it in a *lōla-hasta mudrā*. His right hand is placed, besides his right leg in a *katya valambita mudrā*. He is with big matted hairs; wearing large *kuṇḍala*, cross bands and a medallion of deer horn in his chest, rings in his hands are clearly sculpted.

Fig. 105: This sculpture is found in the entrance *gōpura* wall of the Upper Ahobilam temple. It is similar to the Fig. 101 and 103. But, he is depicted as with good physical structure. His matted hair, a long ring like ear lobe and *laṅgōti* in his hip, are more attractively sculpted.

Fig. 106: This sculpture is found in one of the *maṇḍapa* pillars located to the south of the sanctum of the Bhumīśvaramudaiyār temple at Marakāṇam in Tamiḻnādu. In this a Siddha is seated in an *ardha-padmāsana* pose. His body is bent towards his right side and his head is resting on his right hand, which is already resting on a *yōga-daṇḍa* that placed to his right side. His left hand is holding his right hand. His matted hair and big *kuṇḍala*, a wallet in his left shoulder are depicted in this sculpture.

Fig. 107: This sculpture is found on the *vasantha-maṇḍapa* pillar of the same temple (Fig.106). He is seated in an *ardha-padmāsana* pose as his right leg folded upward in which his both hands are resting together and his chin is resting on his hands. Rounded matted hair, big *kuṇḍala*, a medallion in his chest and a wallet in his left arm are clearly sculpted.

Fig. 108: This sculpture is found on the bottom of a *mukhamaṇḍapa* pillar of Raṅganātha temple at Kāramadai of Coimbatore dist. of Tamiḻnādu. He is depicted in a *Upavesāsana* (squatting pose) and his hands are in *daṇḍa-hasta mudrā*, as similar to Fig.100. Along with the above said appendages, his hair is found to be longer which touches the ground.

Fig. 109: This sculpture is found in *ardhamaṇḍapa* of Kōte Veṅkatēśvara Perumal temple near Tipu Palace in Bangalore. He is depicted as similarly as in Fig.100. Besides, his big *kuṇḍala*, neck ornaments and other appendages are clearly sculpted than the above said one.

Fig. 110: This sculpture is found in one of the *maṇḍapa* pillars of the Śriraṅgam temple. A Siddha is mounted on a hill in a *lalitāsana* pose. His right hand is in *chin mudrā* and his right leg is folded upward and is tied with *yōga-paṭṭa* from his hip. His left leg is hanging on the hill, and in its' thigh, his left hand is resting. He is depicted with long hairs, having beard, wearing *rudrākṣamāla* in his neck and rings on his arms and wrists.

Fig. 111: This temple is found in one of the *maṇḍapa* pillars of Śriraṅgam temple, in which a Siddha is in a *Vrkśāsana* pose standing in his left leg and his right is folded and resting on his left leg. His hands are raised above his head in an *añjali mudrā*. Instead of beard, he is depicted with a long moustache. He is having a long hair and wearing rings on his arms and wrists. He is also wearing a *laṅgōti*.

Fig. 112: This sculpture is found on the top of the pillar in the sanctum of the Ucchipiḷḷaiyar temple, which is located on the hilltop in Tiruchy. He is seated in a *padmāsana* posture and his hands are raised above his head in an *añjali mudrā*. He is having long hair in his head; wearing big *kuṇḍala* his ears and a *laṅgōti*.

Fig. 113: This sculpture is also found in the above temple (Fig.112), in which a Siddha is seated in an *ardha-padmāsana* pose. His left leg is folded upward and tied with a *yōga-paṭṭa* from his hip. His left hand is in *lōla-hasta* pose resting on the left knee. His right hand is in *abhaya-mudrā*. He is having long hair, wearing *rudrākṣamāla* in his neck and chest, rings on his arms and anklets.

Fig. 114: This sculpture is found in the entrance *maṇḍapa* pillar of the Ucchipiḷḷaiyār temple at Trichy, which is looking similar to Fig.110, and his postures are as depicted in Fig. 113. A *rudrākṣamāla* is rounded around his forehead, and he is wearing a *rudrākśmāla* in his chest and in his arms; and anklet in his legs.

Fig. 115: This sculpture is found in the Nandi *maṇḍapa* pillar of Tañjāvūr Brahadīśvara temple. He is in a *Vrkśāsana* pose, standing on his left leg and his right leg is folded to his left thigh. His hands raised above his head as he is in *añjali mudrā*. He is having long hair, big *kuṇḍala* and anklets.

Fig. 116: This sculpture is found in the *mukhamaṇḍapa* of the Tiruvoṭṛiyūr Śiva temple. He is in a *Vrkśāsana* pose, standing in his left leg and his right leg is folded upward to his naval. His both hands are raised above his head. He is having long hairs, his *kuṇḍala* and *laṅgōti* is also visible clearly. Similarly many other sculptures of this same kind are also found in other pillars of this temple.

Fig. 117: This rare sculpture is found in the inside wall of the southern *gōpura* of Villianūr temple. In this a Siddha is standing in a *Vrkśāsana* pose in his right leg and his left leg is folded upward to his right thigh. He is holding a *ēka tārā vīna* (*kiñjurī*?) in his hands. His matted hairs, *kuṇḍala*, medallion on his chest are also clearly sculpted. Though a similar kind of sculpture is found in the *adhistāna* of the *vāhana maṇḍapa* of Lower Ahobilam temple, instead of *Vrkśāsana* pose, he is depicted in *pārśvottānāsana* pose.

Fig. 118: This sculpture is found in the north side of the southern *gōpura* of Villianūr temple. In this a *Nāthapanthi* is seated on a long *yōga-daṇḍa* in a *pariyaṅgāsana* pose. His right hand is resting in a *daṇḍa-hasta* pose on his right leg knee. In his left hand, he is holding a fly whisk like staff. He is wearing the similar appendages as found in the Fig. 24 and Fig.49 such as a medallion of deer horn in his chest, big *kuṇḍala*, matted hair and a wallet in his left arm.

Fig. 119: This sculpture is also found in the above place (in Fig.118). He is seated on the top of the *yōga-daṇḍa* in a squatting pose (*Upavesāsana*) with cross legs (*svastikāsana*) which are tied with a *yōga-paṭṭa*, and his both hands are hanging down by resting on their respective knees in a *daṇḍa-hasta mudrā*. His matted hair and other appendages are clearly visible in this sculpture.

Fig. 120: This sculpture is found on the *ardhamaṇḍapa* pillar of the Villianūr temple. In this the Nātha-Siddha is depicted as he is standing in cross legs and his hands are in *Gaṇēśa mudrā* as they rose above his head, whose index fingers are folded together. His matted hair, deer horn medallion, a wallet in his left shoulder, rings in his arms and wrists, his *laṅgōti* are the common features of the *Nāthapanthis.*

Fig. 121: A similar sculpture is found in the same temple is depicted in *Gaṇēśa mudrā* as shown above in Fig.120. It is found inside the *ardhamaṇḍapa*, nearer to the sanctum of the temple. But it is depicted as he is wearing a *yōga-paṭṭa* under his both thighs.

Fig. 122: This sculpture is found in the eastern *maṇḍapa* pillar of the Virudhāchalam temple. In this, he is standing in a *pārśvottānāsana* pose with his legs widened apart in a *tribhaṅga* pose, and his hands are raised above his head in *Gaṇēśa mudrā* as his left hand is holding his right hand wrist. He is having matted hairs, patched garment in his shoulder and in under waist. A big wallet is hanging in his left shoulder.

Fig. 123: This sculpture is found in another pillar of the Virudhāchalam temple, in which he standing in a *tribhaṅga* posture as his both legs widening apart as like in *pārśvottānāsana* poses. His left leg is slightly bent down and his left hand is resting on his left thigh. He is holding a *kattuvāṅga* (club) in his right hand and a wallet is also tied on his right shoulder. His matter hair, *kuṇḍala*, patched garment on his chest, and *laṅgōti* are clearly depicted.

Fig. 124: This sculpture is found in the *mukhamaṇḍapa* pillar of the Sōmēśvara temple, Ulsūr. He is seated in a *Upavesāsana* (squatting pose) as seen in Fig.102. His legs are crossed and tied with *yōga-paṭṭa*, and his hands folded as his palms are resting on respective knees. He is having long hairs and he is wearing a *rudrākṣamāla* in his neck.

Fig. 125: This sculpture is found in the *mukhamaṇḍapa* pillar of the Ulsūr temple. He is seated in an *ardha-padmāsana* pose. His left leg is slightly folded-up and his left hand is resting on it. His right hand is resting on his right thigh in *katya valambita mudrā*. Unlike other examples, a wallet is tied in his left hand wrist. Matted hair, cross bands in chest, *kuṇḍala*, rings on his hands are also found.

Fig. 126: This sculpture is found in the bottom of an entrance pillar of Kalāsipāḷayam temple. He is seated in *svasthikāsana* with crossed legs. His long matted hair, *kuṇḍala*, rings on his arms and wrists, anklets on his leg, a wallet on his right shoulder, *rudrākṣamāla* on his chest and a *kamaṇḍala* to his left side are beautifully sculpted.

Fig. 127: This sculpture is also found in the entrance pillar of the Jalakantēśvara temple at Kalāsipāḷayam. In this a *Nāthapanthi* is depicted standing with his legs wide apart in a *tribhaṅga* pose. His left hand is resting on his left thigh and his right hand is rising upward. Along with his knotted hairdo, big *kuṇḍalas* in ears, cross bands on his chest, rings on his wrists and arms, and a *laṅgōti* are depicted. Interestingly, as seen above in Fig. 125, he is found with a wallet tied to his left shoulder.

Fig. 128: This sculpture is found in Kalāsipāḷayam temple in which a *Nāthapanthi* is seated in *ardha-padmāsana* pose. His left leg is slightly raised upward and his left hand knee is resting on it and on which, the Siddha is resting his head which is bent slightly towards his left side. His knotted hairdo, big *kuṇḍalas*, ornaments in his neck and chest, rings on his arms and wrists and his *laṅgōti* are depicted clearly as the usual appendages of the *Nāthapanthis*.

(From Fig.129 to Fig.138, all are found in the outer prakāra pillars of the Ādikēśava Perumal temple at Tiruvattāṟu in Kaṉṉiyākumari dist. of Tamiḻnādu)

Fig. 129: This sculpture is found in the outer *prakāra maṇḍapa* of Tiruvattāṟu temple. A Siddha is seated in a *Dwi-pāda Sirasāsana*, in which he lifted upward both of his legs above his head and his hands are in *añjali mudrā*. His secret parts are shown as clearly visible. His hair is knotted and he is with a beard. Above his head an *aṣtatala padma* is depicted.

Fig. 130: In this sculpture, he is seated on a mount in a *daṇḍa-hasta mudrā*, which is similar to the Figs. 110 and 114. But his seating posture is similar to Fig.119. His hair is knotted and he is having beard and an *aṣtatala padma* is also depicted above his head.

Fig. 131: In this sculpture, a Siddha is depicted performing *ūrdhva padmāsana* in *Sirisāna*, as his body shown upside down and his hands are placed on the ground holding together in *Gaṇēśa mudrā*. On his hands, his head is resting and his legs are folded upwards in *padmāsana*. He is having beard, *rudrākṣamāla* in his neck, rings on his arms etc.

Fig. 132: In this sculpture, he is carrying a *liṅga* in his right hand holding his long erect penis in his left hand. His hairs are knotted and rounded with a *rudrākṣamāla*. He is also shown with beard.

Fig. 133: In this sculpture, he is shown standing in *Vrkśāsana*(?) with his right leg crossed on his left leg. His both hands are raised upward and holding each other in *Gaṇēśa mudrā*. He is having long hair, beard, wearing a *laṅgōti*, rings on his hands and anklets on his legs. Above his head an *aṣtatala padmā* is depicted and to his left a serpent is shown as it is rising upward.

Fig. 134: In this a Siddha is standing in a *pārśvottāsana* as his legs are wide apart along with his erect penis. He appears to be older in age whose face is shrunk. He is shown with a beard, long hair on his back. He is indicating with his right index finger the *mūlādhāra* and showing his left hand above his head.

Fig. 135 to Fig. 137: in this sculpture, the *yōgic* practitioner in a *pārśvottāsana* is shown as he is holding his erect penis in his left hand and showing his right hand index finger on his head where the *sahasrāra* is located. He is shown with long hair, big moustache, and a medallion on his chest.

Fig. 136: This sculpture is same as Fig.135 and 137 in which he is in a *pārśvottāsana*. But on his left side a snake is shown as it is rising upward. Thus from the above representations, we may think that these sculptures clearly depict the practice of *kuṇḍaliṇi yōga*, in which the snake is shown for the raising of *kuṇḍaliṇi* and the fingers indicating the lower part of the body (buttocks) – the starting point of the *kuṇḍaliṇi* power and also the top of the head where the *sahasrāra*, the final destination point of the *kuṇdalini* is. Many sculptures of this same kind are found in the same *prakāra* of this temple as well as in the Tāṉumālaya Perumal temple a Sucīndram in Kaṉṉiyākumari dist. of Tamiḻnādu.

Fig. 138: In this sculpture, a Siddha appears to be an aged person and is in *pārśvottāsana* in *tribhaṅga* pose, with his body slightly bent forward. He is shown with his erect penis. He is having long beard and hair, and also a wallet tied to his left arm.

Fig. 139: This sculpture is found on the ceiling beam of the *Puthumaṇḍapa* of Tiruvotriyūr Śiva temple. In this, a male figure he is depicted with *sat-cakras* in the respective places of his body starting from *mūlādhāra* to *Sahasrāra*. Below his feet the moon (*ida*) is shown and above the head the Sun is shownt (*piṅgala*). Though it seems to be of a later period, this kind of sculptures are a rare.

From **Fig. 140 to Fig. 147**, all are found in an ithyphallic pose in different standing postures, found in different temples. Of these, Fig. 140 to Fig. 143 are found in the outer *prakāra* pillars of the Tiruvattāṟu temple. All of these Siddhas are shown with their erected penis in different *yōgic* postures. Except Fig. 144 and Fig. 145, all are shown in a *pārśvottāsana* pose. In Fig. 140, he raised his hands upwards above his head in *añjali mudrā*. In Fig. 144, he bents his body slightly backward and his hands are raised above his head in a *Gaṇēśa mudrā*, in which his left hand holding his right hand. An *aṣtatala padmā* is also depicted above him. Though, in Fig. 142 and 143, his hands are above his head in also in *Gaṇēśa mudrā*, in these sculptures his right hand is holding his left hand.

Fig. 144: This sculpture is found in the *ardhamaṇḍapa* pillar of Bāhūr Mūlanātha temple, in which a Siddha is depicted in an ithyphallic pose. He is shown nude and his penis erect. He is in a *Tādāsana* pose and his hands are raised above his head in *añjali mudrā*.

He is having long hair, big moustache and beard. (*Interestingly, while taking this photograph, coincidently a devotee is also standing behind this pillar and worshipping with his hands raised above his head in añjali mudrā in front of the sanctum*).

Fig. 145: This sculpture is found in the southern *maṇḍapa* pillar of the Raṅganātha temple at Śriraṅgam. In this a Siddha is in *Tādāsana* pose, whose virile membrane is shown as erected. His hands are raised above his head in *añjali mudrā*. Above his forehead may be a bald one, but a long hair is shown from his backside of the head.

Fig. 146: This sculpture is found in the entrance pillar of the Perumal temple at Tirupathisāram, in Tirunelveli Dist. of Tamiḻnādu. He is standing in in a *pārśvottāsana* pose as his legs wide apart and his right leg is little forward. His hands are raised above his head and joined together with coiled index fingers in *Gaṇēśa mudrā*. He is wearing a *rudrākṣamāla* in his head, neck and on his arms.

Fig. 147: This sculpture is found in the northern entrance of a Viṣṇu temple at Āranmula in Kerala. It is in the same form as Fig. 146.

Fig. 148 to Fig. 161are the depictions of Bhairavi Cakra/Cakra Pūjā practice of the Tāntric cult. Usually in sculptures, the practice of *Bhairavi Cakra* is always depicted with a group of male tantric practitioners who are lesser in height than the woman and standing in a nude pose with or holding their erect virile membrane (penis) in their hand. And they are in *añjali mudrā*, in front of or at the legs of the gigantic nude women, (hereafter called as *Bhairavi*), who is showing her secret parts in a standing pose. However, there are slight differences in those depictions in each place. Sometimes the male practitioners may be four or less in numbers and even one also.

Fig. 148: This sculpture is found in the *prakāra* wall of the Śrisailam temple, in which the *Bhairavi* is nude and sitting in a squatting pose (*upavesāsana*) by showing her secret parts. Surrounding her, the tantric practitioners are in *añjali mudrā* with erect penis. Interestingly, in this panel, a Siddha is shown seated with *yōga-paṭṭa*, as the guide those practitioners. Except this panel, almost in all the panels of this *Cakra Pūjā*, *Bhairavi* is depicted in a standing posture.

Fig. 149: This panel is found on the top of a *maṇḍapa* in the Kalmaṇḍapam village of Puduchērry. The village is also named after this *maṇḍapa*, which is belongs to the Vijayanagara period. In this *maṇḍapa*, there are a series of panels depicting different kinds of religious practices of which *Bhairavi Cakra* is also one. In this a nude women is standing in a *varada mudrā* and other practitioners in *añjali mudrā*, and one of them is kneeling down at her feet.

Fig. 150: This sculpture is found on the pillar of the Kōte Veṅkatēśvara temple at Bangalore, in which a devotee in *añjali mudrā* and standing behind the nude lady who is depicted taller than the practitioners. Her right hand is resting on her right thigh and her left hand is in *suchi* (*Tarjani*) *mudrā*.

Fig. 151: This sculpture is found in the northern *maṇḍapa* of the Śriraṅgam temple. One can find numerous sculptures of this same kind in this *maṇḍapa*. In this, two practitioners

are depicted as they are worshipping her, and she is holding the *Suchi mudrā* with her right hand and left hand is resting on her left thigh.

Fig. 152: This sculpture is found in a *maṇḍapa* located in front of the sanctum of the Tiruvattāṟu temple. In this panel, a single practitioner in nude with his erect penis is shown behind the *Bhairavi*, who is standing and whose legs are crossed. She is shown nude with her big pudenda and her other secrets parts. He is in *añjali mudrā* and wearing the *rudrākṣamāla*. More than fifty representations of (with some differences) of this *Bhairavi Cakra* are found in this temple as well as in the *Tāṉumālaya* temple at Sucindram in Kaṉṉiyākumari district.

Fig. 153: This sculpture is found in the entrance *maṇḍapa* of the Ēkāmbarēśvara temple at Kāñcipuram of Tamiḻnādu. More than usual, here *Bhairavi* is depicted in *Vrkśāsana* pose and in *añjali mudrā* in a nude form. Under her, two practitioners are depicted; one is kneeling down to her feet and another one is standing and just bent towards her by holding his erect penis in his both hands. His hairdo is similar with the hair style found in the Fig.60. He is wearing *rudrākṣamāla* in his neck and arms; and both are found with the beard.

Fig. 154: This sculpture is found on a pillar in front of the main sanctum of Kāmātchiamman Temple at Kāñcipuram. In this a single practitioner is standing with his erect penis and holding his right hand towards the pudenda of the *Bhairavi*. His ornaments and hairdo are similar to the Fig.153. Here *Bhairavi* is shown in *dwibhaṅga* pose and lifted up her right hand above her head and her left hand is freely hanging in the *lōla-hasta mudrā*.

Fig. 155: This sculpture is found in the pillared hall of the Varadarāja Perumal temple at Kāñjipuram. In this four nude practitioners are standing on the either side of *Bhairavi*, with their erect penis. Of them, one is kneeling down to her feet. The coiffure of the *Bhairavi* is in the late Nāyaka style. She is also nude and her left hand is hanging freely in *lōla-hasta mudrā* and her right hand is broken, but it may be in the *suchi mudrā*.

Fig. 156: This sculpture is found in the *mukhamaṇḍapa* pillar of the Tirukaḻukuṉṟam Murugaṉ temple. In this *Bhairavi* is depicted as taller and her left hand is in *suchi* (*Tarjani*) *mudrā*. Her right hand is placed on her right thigh and her fingers slightly hide her secret part. Under her are shown, two practitioners with erect penis, one in *añjali mudrā* and another one holding his penis in his hand.

Fig. 157: It is similar to the above (Fig.156) sculpture. In this two practitioners are found under the nude *Bhairavi*. She is standing nude and her right hand is in *suchi* or *Tarjani mudrā* and her left hand is placed on her left thigh and her fingers almost hiding her pudenda. Her coiffure appears to a late Vijayanagara style.

Fig. 158: This sculpture is found in the inner wall of the southern *gōpura* of Villiaṉūr temple. Similar panels on twenty occasions depict the same scene in other parts of this temple. In this sculpture *Bhairavi* is depicted with her right hand in *Tarjani/Suchi mudrā* and her left hand is resting her left thigh. Five practitioners are standing on her either side.

Of them two are kneeling down to her feet on both sides and others are in a nude pose with erect penis in *añjali mudrā*.

Fig. 159: This stucco sculpture is found on the northern side of the *vimāna* of the *Pañcanadīśvara* temple at Tiruvaṇdārkōil. In this two practitioners are depicted along with the nude *Bhairavi*. One is in an *upavesāsana* (squatting) pose and holding his penis in his right hand and right leg of the *Bhairavi* in his left hand. Another practitioner is in *añjali mudrā* standing behind her with his erect penis.

Fig. 160: This stucco sculpture is found in the entrance *gōpura* of the Tirumeyyam temple at Pudukōṭṭai dist. of Tamiḻnādu. In this, the nude *Bhairavi* is depicted in a *varada mudrā* with her right hand and her left hand is resting in her left thigh. Two practitioners are depicted on either side with erect penis. One is holding his penis in his right hand and keeping his left hand on his head. Another one is in *lalitāsana* and holding his penis in his both hands. Both are found with beard, *rudrākṣamāla*, etc.

Fig. 161: This sculpture is found on the second tier of the entrance *gōpura* of the Tirukaṇṇamaṅgai Śri Bhakthavatchala Perumal temple of Kumbakōṇam dist. of Tamiḻnādu. It is the depiction of the *Bhairavi Cakra* in a polished way as all their secret parts are covered with dresses viz. *laṅgōti* for male and a half-sari for female. Here the *Bhairavi* is depicted in *varadha mudrā* and a practitioner under her is seems to receive something from her and one is found with *añjali mudrā*. Since it is Vaiṣṇava temple, all of them are shown with Vaiṣṇavite symbols in their forehead.

Fig. 162: This stucco sculpture is found in same place (Fig.161), in which Mīṉanātha is seated on a fish in *lalitāsana* and holding the breast of a woman who is standing to his left. In turn, she is holding his hair with her left hand; and holding his left hand by her right hand. This seems to be the depiction of 'Kadali' part of the stories on Mīṉanātha. To their right side another siddha kneeling down under *Bhairavi*, as he is holding her breast in his right hand. To their right side another Siddha also kneeling down under the lady who is in *lalitāsana* pose and removing a snake which seems to be licking her pudenda. He may be the Gōrakṣanātha, who came to rescue his *guru* Mīṉanātha, in the above legend. Instead of horizontal *Tripundra* (of Śaiva sects) in their forehead, all are depicted with the Vaiṣṇavite symbols of vertical *Tripundra*.

Fig. 163: This shrine found in the premises of Abirāmi temple at Tirukadavūr in the Kumbakōṇam dist. of Tamiḻnādu. It is said that Siddha Pulasthiyar worshipped the *liṅga* in this shrine.

Chapter IV

SIDDHA CULT IN TAMIḺNĀDU
ITS HISTORY AND HISTORICAL CONTINUITY

As discussed in the previous chapter, the Natha Siddha cult and tradition became popular during the medieval period as a pan-Indian tradition including the Tamiḻ region[1]. In fact, the tradition of the *Siddhāchāryās* is a part of a larger āgamic, *tāntric* and *yōgic* tradition of India, comimg from all four corners of the country such as Tamiḻnādu, Maharashtra, Kaśmir and Bengal; as revealed by a vast body of literary production[2] of the Tamiḻ *Siddhas*, the *nāth yōgīs*, the *Vaiṣṇava sahajiyās*, and the *bāuls* respectively in their vernacular languages namely Tamiḻ, Marathi, Kashmiri and Bengali, between the 10th - 17th centuries C.E.

Another common feature found among them is that they did not view the Supreme as an object of worship but as a living presence within. Instead of scriptures, they relied on human *gurus* or the inner conscience as a guide; instead of ritual or worship, they emphasised practices that opened the way to mystical experience. Since they viewed the Godhead as a principle within them, they gave a good deal of importance to the body, which they regarded both as a vessel of divinity and a means for its attainment". They promoted the practices like *prāṇāyāma*, and to some extent the esoteric sexuality. They perfected their physical body as an instrument of progress to achieve their spiritual goal. To them salvation is not a freedom after death or while living in a body doomed to die, but perfection in an immortal body (*Siddha dēha*). Therefore, many of them experimented with alchemy and in seeking of supernatural powers, popularly known as *Aṣta siddhis*. By totally renouncing their conventional life, these Siddhas wandered in many places and transmitted their teachings through simple and colloquial verses or songs. The central themes of their songs are in mystical sense drawn from daily life of the common people, but mostly in twilight language, which should be understand only by the initiates[3].

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[1] The Siddhas are generally classified into Nātha Siddhas, Rasa Siddhas, Mahēśvara Siddhas and Saṅgata Siddhas. The Rasa Siddhas are medicine men while the Saṅgata Siddhas are the Buddhist Siddhas. Besides, the *yōgācārā* school of *Tāntric* Buddhism another sect with an account of 84 Buddhist *Siddhāchāryās* emerged as its offshoot.

[2] Peter Heehs (ed.), *Indian Religions: The Spiritual Traditions of South-Asia – Anthology*, Permanent Black, New Delhi, 2002, p. 281

[3] *Ibid,* p. 282

Their teachings are all socio-centric and human centric and preached the necessity of harmonious living to form an egalitarian society. They frequently raised the voice against the caste distinctions and social inequalities. They rebelled against the traditional practices and confronted the established religious and social organizations. They rejected the meaningless rituals, ceremonies, ridiculed the blind beliefs and selfish motives behind them. As free thinkers they were not dogmatic and text bound, but rational in their outlook. In the real sense, they treated the whole humankind as one clan and as theists they advocated the concept of monotheism (*oṉṟē kulam- oruvaṉē dēvaṉ*)[4]. But their spiritual aim was the realization of the oneness of individual self (microcosm, or *piṇḍa*) with the universal self (macrocosm, or *aṇḍa*); through their physical and spiritual exercises. For that they practiced the *Kuṇḍalini yōga and haṭha Yōga* and are considered to be renowned *jñānis* or supreme mystics by their *yōgic* practices. They transcended all existing empirical limits of the physical or psychological planes and completely withdrew from the society. Since these Siddhas are more concerned about the physical, mental and moral life of the lay people, they delivered their messages and experiences to the public, which they gained from deep meditation and realization, which helped them to lead a harmonious life. Their boundless compassion and social concern was revealed through a vast body of literary output preserved in the form of palm leaf manuscripts, on medicine, *yōga*, philosophy, ethics, alchemy and science. Besides, they were custodians of our ancient sciences such as biology, medicine, alchemy, architecture, astronomy, etc[5].

Kamil V. Zvelebil says that the Tamiḻ Siddha cult is "one of the most important and interesting off-shoots of the pan-Indian *Tāntric Yōga* movement"[6]. During 19th-20th centuries, the scholars who listed out the 'Tamiḻ Siddhas' or the Siddhas of the Dravidian country appears to have been confused in numbering them, whom to add and whom to avoid, because of the lack of knowledge about the appearance, characters, qualities, or common definitions of Siddhas. As a result we have many lists of 'Eighteen Siddhas', and even more. Besides, the persons who

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[4] *Tirumandiram*, verse 2066, South Indian Śaiva Siddhānta Works publishing Society, Tinnevely, 2007 (rep.), p.823.

[5] S.N. Kandaswamy, *The Yoga of Siddha Avvai*, Kriya Yoga Publications, Cannada, 2004, pp. 2-4

[6] Kamil V. Zvelebil, *The Poets of the Powers*, Rider & Co, London, 1973, p.16; (hencefore *The Poets*) see also Mircea Eliade, *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom*, p.304.

developed the stories of the Siddhas mostly borrowed from the Tibetian and Buddhist sources and applied them in the descriptions of the Tamiḻ Siddhas. One interesting aspect in this is that many of names of the Buddhist Siddhācāryās and Navanāthas are found either with the same name or in corrupted form in the different lists of the Tamiḻ Siddhas. Most of the persons who were all engaged in Siddha-medicine or herbal medical practices are not Siddhas in real. But they are considered to be, and called by common people as Siddhas. In fact, the personalities like Vyāghrapādar and Patañjali are not included in the list of Siddhas, but they were celebrated as experts of *yōga*. Besides, the doctors or physicians who wrote *ĀyūrVēdic* medical treatises was also not included in the list or not called as Siddhas.

Traditional groups of the Tamiḻ Siddhas

Seen from a historical perspective, at least three groups of thinkers bear the designation of Siddha in Tamiḻ culture:[7]

1) A group of alchemists and physicians who have constituted the indigenous school of medicine, and composed a (probably vast) number of alchemical and medical treatises, as yet almost unknown to outsides, whether Indian or non-Indian. This group constitutes the *citta vaittiyam* or 'Siddhas medicine' and *citta racavātam* or 'Siddha alchemy' such as Nandi (Nandikēśvarar), Agattiyar, Tirumūlar, Śivavākkiar, Gōrakhar, Koṅkaṇar, Bōgar, Daṉvaṇtri, Pulippāṇi, Tēraiyar, Karuvūrār, Kālaṅgi etc.

2) A group of esoteric poets who have composed a large volume of poetry in Tamiḻ between roughly the 10th – 15th centuries C.E such as Śivavākkiyar, Paṭṭiṇattār, Pāmbāṭṭicittar, Bhadṛagiri, Idaikādar etc.

3) A few 'Siddha –like' mystical poets who have been classed with the Siddha thinkers by later generations, or who called themselves *citta* without properly belonging (so it would seem) to the esoteric group mentioned above (e.g. Tāyumāṉavar of the 17th century, or Rāmaliṅga Swāmi, 1823-1874 C.E.).

Many of these siddhas hailed from the hilly regions of Tamiḻnādu and to some extent from different parts of South India and beyond. Among them one group hailed from Kailaśa, (*Kailāya varga*) with Siddha Agastya as their prime head, and the

[7] K.V.Zvelebil, *The Poets*, p.17.

second group known as *Mūla-varga* under Tirumūlar, and the third one claims Nandi as their prime and Lord Śiva as chief Siddha.

Apart from these three groups, there emerged another group called *Bāla-varga* with Lord Muruga as their principal *guru*. Besides these, there are also Siddhas of Tamil̠ regions that do not belong to any of the above traditions or *Vargas*, and in this study, some of them are classified as *Vāk* Siddhars. These Siddhars are traditionally not very well known and there is no list of the *Vāk* Siddhars of the historical times. During the modern and contemporary period also there are many siddhars of this class whose words become true and boons are bestowed on the devotees. When their wishes are fulfilled the devotees call them as *Vāk* Siddhars and thus they become famous.

Many Siddhas claimed their relationship to Tirumūlar (*Mūla-varga*). One of them was Koṅgaṇar, the disciple of Bōgar. Koṅgaṇar mentioned in the first part of *Vāda-kāviyam* (verse 308) that he was the grandson of Tirumūlar. The third group which is considered chronologically the most ancient, hailed from the celestial Nandidēva. He is semantically identified with Ṛṣabadēva, who gained the wisdom directly from the Supreme Lord Śiva. Tirumūlar admits that he was a disciple of Nandidēva and one among the eight spiritual masters who are graced by him[8]. He became the Nātha Siddha due to the grace of Nandi Nātha who is cited in a number of post-12th century sources[9]. The Tamil̠ Siddha tradition also maintains that Nandi (kēśvara) was an alchemist. Infact, Tirumūlar in many of his songs declares that he belongs to the tradition of Nandi and all of his 3000 verses were the outcome of the grace of the Nandi[10]. A limited number of documents indicate that a historical figure named Nandi may have lived in the same century as Tirumūlar. This Nandi, a

[8] Tirumūlar mentions that he has seven descendants namely Mālāṅgan̠, Indira, Sōman̠, Brahman̠, Ruttiran̠, Kanduru, Kālaṅgi and Kañjamalaiyan̠. Among them, Patañjali and Vyāgrapāda were ardent devotees of Lord Natarāja. *Tirumandiram*, verse 129, 132, p.57, Verse 130 is also saying the similar kinds of things. For the explanation of this song see, S.N. Kandaswamy, *Op.cit*, p.6

[9] David Gordon White, *The Alchemical Body*, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 2004, p.61

[10] Tirumūlar says that '*Mūlan Urai Cheitha Mūvāyiran Tamil̠, Gñālam aṟiyavē Nandi aruḷathu…*' It is also said in another song that Tirumūlar authored 30 upadēsa, 300 mantras, 3000 Tamil̠ and all the above three are the same. *Tirumandiram*, verses 132 and 1, p.88 and 87 respectively. In many of his verses, the name Nandi is often mentioned. Ten verses starts with the name Nandi viz., *Tirumandiram*, verses 129-130, 135, 156, 506, 786, 2404, 2594, 2755 and 2907 in pp.57,59, 68, 229, 333, 978, 1064, 1140 and 1218 respectively.

Buddhist monk from central India, left India in the middle of the seventh century, traveling by sea to Śrilaṅka and Southeast Asia before arriving in China in 655 C.E. A year later, the emperor of China shipped him off to sea again to collect medicinal herbs. He returned to China in 663 C.E[11].

Another group of Siddhas are popular under the name of *Bāla-varga*. The word *Bāla* denotes the ever youthful Muruga, the beloved prodigy of Śiva and the favorite God of the Tamils. From the commentary of Nacciṉārkkiṉiyar (1400 C.E.) on *Tirumurugāṟṟuppadai*, a *Saṅgam* poem, it becomes clear that the epithet *Siddhar* (line 176) denoted Lord Muruga and his shrine at *Tiruvāvinaṇkudi*, now known as Pa<u>l</u>a<u>n</u>i, was once called Cittan-vā<u>l</u>vu, i.e., the habitat of the *Siddha* (Muruga)[12]. Perhaps, this name came into vogue after Siddha Bōgar established the idol of Muruga (*Daṇḍapāṇi*), made out of nine-fold *pāṣaṇās* (*navapāṣāṇam/*arsenic or chemical compounds) and engaged in deep meditation for a very long period. His disciple Pulippāṇi was also attached to this reputed shrine of Muruga. The descendants of Pulippāṇi were the official priests of the temple till the intervention of Rāmappaiyan, the minister of Tirumalai Nāyak, who ruled the Pāṇdya country in the 17th century C.E.

It is to be noted that a unique Siddha tradition was prevalent in the region of Pa<u>l</u>a<u>n</u>i Hills and in modern times, many holy persons in that area claim their relationship with Bōgar and Pulippāṇi[13]. Lord Muruga is praised as a great Siddha of *Bāla-varga* group. He rides on the peacock, the killer of serpents. 'Serpent stands for the cycle of years or the cycle of births. 'Peacock' stands for the killer of time and thereby birth and death[14]. Muruga<u>n</u>, also known as 'Kumaran' is an important deity in "*yōga* as the power of chastity, the power of the virile seed, preserved through penance; so long as complete control is not attained in practice of *yōga*, Kumara is not born'; only by making (the sublime) semen rise through the central channel of the

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[11] David Gordon White, *op.cit,* p.61.

[12] *Pattu-p-pāṭṭu* (*with commentary by Nacciṉārkkiṉiyar*), U. V. Saminatha Aiyar (Ed.), Tami<u>l</u> University, Tañjāvūr, 1986 (rep.), p.60.

[13] T.N. Gaṇapathy, *The Yoga of Siddha Boganathar, Vol.I*, Babaji's Kriya Yoga and Publications, Canada, 2004, pp. 281-286 (hencefore T.N. Gaṇapathy, *Bōgar*)

[14] T.N. Gaṇapathy, *The Philosophy of the Tamil Siddhas*, ICPR, New Delhi, 2004, p.22

sublime body up to the 'mouth of fire' in the sixth centre where it is consumed, the *yōgin* becomes complete master, and 'skanda is born'[15]".

Another group of Siddhas that existed during the 10th and 11th centuries was known as *Tīrthika* Siddhas. They became celebrated for their extraordinary knowledge; fond of debates and display of their knowledge among the public or in the royal courts. The *tīrthikas* were distinguished by certain symbols like umbrellas. It is said that once a *tīrthika paṇdita* from the South India was honoured with five umbrellas for challenging Dipaṅkara (C.E. 982-1054), who was celebrated for his scholarship not only among the contemporary Buddhists and others. These umbrellas were symbolic remains of their scholastic distinction and disposition[16].

Similarly, there existed yet another group of Siddhas from the South known as Mahēśvara Siddhas. They advocate the pure method (*śuddha mārga)*. Because, the *dakśiṇa śrota* (the right current), stressed on *vidyā* (knowledge) through *yōgic* practices, instead of using the five '*m*'s as used by the *vāma śrota* (left current), which include blood sacrifices, drinking and female consorts. The Tamil̲ Siddhas belong to the *dakśiṇa śrota*[17]. Another School of Siddhas as mentioned by M.S. Purnalingam Piḷḷai traces its descent from Lord Śiva as the author of seven lakhs of verses on medicine alchemy, *mantra, kalpa* and *yōga*. Nandi, Sanakar, Sanathar, Sanāthanar, Sanatkumārar, Tirumūlar, Patañjali, Agastya, Pulatthiar, Pusuṇdar, Kālaṅgi, Bōgar, Koṅkaṇar, Karuvūrār, Dan̲vaṇtri, Saṭṭaimun̲i, Tēraiyar, Yūgimun̲i and other Siddhars immortalized the Tamil̲ land with multitudes of their medical and scientific treatises based on Lord Śiva's work[18].

Tradition asserts that Nandi and Agastya learnt the Siddha system of medicine, and also *Śivayōga* from Śiva, and imparted it to a number of disciples. Generally the *Siddhargaṇa* comprised of eighteen. Though this number is mentioned in several books like the *Kāmikāgama* and *Abhidhāna Cintāmaṇi*, the names are not the same.

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15 Kamil V. Zvelebil, *The Poets*, pp. 130-131, (fn 7)

16 S.N. Saletore, *Indian Witchcraft*, Abhinav Publications, New Delhi, 1981, pp.175-176

17 T.N. Gaṇapathy, *The Philosophy of the Tamil Siddhas*, p.22

18 Purnalingam Pillai also gave a detailed account on medical practices of the Siddhas and a brief outline about Gōrakṣa, Koṅkaṇar, Brahmamuṇi, Bōgar, Śivavākkiar, Danvaṇtri and Pulippaṇi respectively in his work. For more details see M.S. Purnaliṅgam Piḷḷai, Tamil̲ Literature, Tamil̲ University, Tañjāvūr, 1985, pp.262-266

Tirugñānasambandar and later on Tāyumāṉavar refer to the *siddhagaṇa* with respect and approval. This means that the work and tradition of the Siddhars were appreciated even by the elite and the erudite of the Tamiḻ.

The eighteen siddhars mentioned in the *Abhidāna Cintāmaṇi* are 1. Agastya, 2. Bōgar, 3. Gōrakṣa, 4.Kailāśanātha, 5. Saṭṭaimuṉi, 6.Tirumūlar, 7. Nandi, 8. Kūnkaṇṇar, 9. Koṅgaṇar, 10.Macchamuṉi, 11.Vāsamuṉi, 12. Kūrmamuṉi, 13. Kamalamuṉi, 14. Idaikkādar,15. Punnākkīsar, 16.Sundarānandar, 17. Urōmariṣi and 18. Brahmamuṉi[19]. For many of the above Siddhas, there is no evidence either of their lives or of their works.One of the common themes which unified them is, the the acceptance of the human body as the microcosm of the universe, and the human evolution as the ultimate accomplishment of the regenerative power of the Universe. If their texts resist systematization, their anti-establishment voices place them beyond organised religion.

Interestingly, the ideas and practices of the Tamiḻ Siddhas bear semblance to those of the Nātha-panthis and other *tāntric* sects. It is also obvious that the various accounts of Tamiḻ Siddhas invariably mention Gōrakṣnāth as one of their illustrious elders.

Since the ideologies of the Siddhas frequently clashed with the *Vēdic*/brahmanic thinking, the brahmanas tried to distort the significant contributions of the Siddhas. In fact, the *Śaiva Siddhāntha* works purposefully excluded Siddha views and their most valuable works from its canonical corpus and social philosophy. As a result, most of the Siddha's works were preserved by the common folk of non-brahminical order. It is clear that Siddhas were completely detached from the brahmanical norms and cultural patterns. But it was their atheist attitude to religious practices and beliefs of the ruling classes is the common thread that bonds them together[20]. Many scholars opined that the Tamiḻ Siddha tradition is nothing but a continuity or an offshoot of *Navanātha* tradition of western India.

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[19] V. Ramachandra Dikshitar, 'The Siddhars of South India' in *The Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, 7th session, University of Madras, 1944, vol.7, pp. 162-167

[20] Braj Ranjan Mani, *Debrahmanising History: Dominance and Resistance in Indian Society*, Manohar, Delhi, 2007, pp.158.

Lorenzen rightly pointed out that, "*A unique and significant development of the medieval period was the meeting of the āstika and the nāstika traditions on a large scale. The Nātha pantha was an offshoot of the nāstika tradition of the Buddhist Siddhas. But it had upheld many āstika values as well. The transformation of the Buddhist Siddha tradition into Nātha pantha came about when Gōrakṣanātha tried to cleanse the former of the Tantirka elements by replacing them with the yōgic. His preference for yōga was coupled with āstika beliefs in the existence of an eternal Reality and a broad acceptance of the monistic philosophy Gōrakṣanātha had also incorporated the cult of Śiva-worship in his sect which brought the Nātha pantha close to the Śaivite sects. These features of the Nātha pantha gave it the character of a āstika sect in spite of the fact that it had stemmed from the nāstika Buddhist Siddha tradition*"[21].

Around the 8th or 9th century, the Siddhas and *Yōgis* were communicating their ideas in the common language. Whatever their religious and cultural orientation may be, there was no question about their social radicalism. Irrespective of caste, creed or sex anyone could be initiated into the Siddha, *Tāntric* and *Nāthapanthi* orders[22]. The Nātha tradition of the north India of 12th-13th centuries may be considered as the pioneers or front runners to the Tamil̲ Siddha tradition. Very often, Gōrakṣanātha and Matsyēndranātha are included in all the lists of eighteen Tamil̲ Siddhas as Kōrakkar and Macchamun̲i or Macchēndirar and there also prevail many folk tales relating them to the Tamil̲ Siddha tradition.

The Tamil̲ Siddhas also acted as leaders of anti-brahmin movement. Most of them hailed from low-caste non-brahmans groups, who came up with their unique ideologies such as belief in one God, as well as a passionate advocacy of social justice[23]. The Tamil̲ Siddhas like Tirumūlar, Śivavākkiyar and Pāmbāṭṭi were multi-faceted, monotheistic, sometimes even agnostic who sang subversive songs. Many of their practices and ideologies were questioned by the traditional order. But these Siddhas practiced all material and sexual prohibitions to achieve their determined goals and also led a care-free life. Thus, the Siddha movement totally rejected the inscriptive institutionalized Brahmanism, which paved way for the formation of egalitarian *Bhakti* and Sūfi movements with a liberal and unorthodox faith during the succeeding centuries in India[24]. The strong strain of asceticism in Tamil̲ Śaiva religion

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[21] David N. Lorenzen (ed.), *Religious Movements in South Asia: 600-1800*, OUP, Delhi, 2004, pp.310-311.

[22] Braj Ranjan Mani, *Op.cit.*, p. 141.

[23] *Ibid,* p. 136.

[24] *Ibid,*p. 82.

was fully developed in the Siddhānta philosophy and the Siddha cult. It is represented in hymns, by which the body and the senses are portrayed as obstacles to the devotee in his or her efforts to realize the Lord's grace. Images of revulsion for the body, and for decay and death, dominate their songs and poems.

There are several categories of the Siddha songs, ranging from the very general to the technically specific. "Every man who meditates on Śiva" (*cittattaic civan̲pālē vaippār*) is taken to signify *yōgis* or Siddhas[25]. The Siddha tradition, especially the *Siddha vaidya* or the Siddha medicine is fully alive in many forms, more particularly in their songs. Their songs also portray the extraordinary heroism and strength of conviction of the Tamil̲ Siddhas. Therefore knowledge of the works of the Tamil̲ Siddhas is more necessary to have a correct perspective of the age-old civilization, literature and socio-religious history of the Tamils[26].

The Tamil̲ Siddha School has received scant attention from scholars and students of Indian philosophy possibly because they have not built up a unified system of philosophy. Very often these Siddhas and their philosophies were misunderstood and misinterpreted by the outsiders. Their importance as a historical movement in a socio-cultural aspect has not yet been studied in whole.

Their teachings reveal that they were not seeking material gains or any other advantage from the public. Their system of *Yōga* is aimed at achieving the experimental knowledge of God. Their spiritual healing and alchemical teachings aimed at enabling the whole of humanity to enjoy[27]. Tāyumān̲avar says that the happiness he received should be obtained/transmitted to all[28]. They identified the Reality as Universal Energy, *Śakti* or *Vaiaddēvi*. For instance, Tāyumān̲avar speaks of *Śakti*, the Supreme Reality as the One Source whence issue forth all these multi-universes and many of the Siddhas address Her as the Virgin. Thus, the Tamil̲ Siddhas

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[25] Indira Viswanathan Peterson, Poems to Siva: *The Hymns of the Tamil Saints*, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Limited, Delhi, 1991, pp. 207, 182 (n)

[26] Kamil V. Zvelebil, *The Smile of Murugan on Tamil Literature of South India*, E.J. Brill, Leiden, 1973, p. 236; (henceforth Kamil V. Zvelebil, *The Smile*)

[27] S.A. Sarma, *Op.cit*., p. 25

[28] *Yān̲ petra in̲bam peruga ivvaiagam; Ellōrum in̲butṛirukka ninaippatuve āllāmal vērōn̲drumariyēn parāparame….*

shine as the most eminent representatives of this long tradition of indigenous spiritual culture[29].

For most of them, the chief deity is *Śivam* which is found without any limitation and without any attributes. *Śivam* is the supreme thing (*parāparam*) which is spread all over the universe (*eṅkumāy paranta*), and at the same time existing within the men[30]. They believe that there is God and also proposes that Brahman encompasses all that is. Brahman is unmanifested oneness but manifests itself in the diversity of all that is-the salt that is invisible but unmistakably present in salt water.

The Siddhas who hailed from subaltern groups and sang subversive songs, kept aside the religious differences and embraced brotherhood, love and compassion, extolling these human expressions as the intrinsic worth of religion. In this sense, apart from Tirumūlar, they carried forward the legacy of two other Tami<u>l</u> cultural icons, Tiruvaḷḷuvar, the author of *Tirukkuṛal* and Nandanār, the 8th century untouchable saint who struggled against brahmanical tyranny to enter the socio-religious domain[31]. To relate the Tami<u>l</u> Siddha tradition into Śaivism, they show the Tirumūlar as one of the Siddhas, who is also already included in the list of sixty-three Nāyaṇmārs. Some Siddhas assumed the names of the great men of antiquity like Agastya, Kapilar and Tiruvaḷḷuvar which led to a confusion and contradiction in their chronology. Tirumūlar and Bōgar are associated with numerous myths. They are masters of the physical world also. Just by pissing[32], or even spitting, on a rock a Siddha can produce gold. In alchemy one has to use metal as their raw material, but a siddha only needs a rock. Regarding the supernatural powers of the Siddhas, Pāmbāṭṭi Siddhar says:

> *We can make the pillar appear a tiny stalk, and also make vice versa.*
> *We can convert a male into a female and also conversely.*
> *We play and dance, lifting the eight-fold mountains as balls.*

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[29] S.A. Sarma, *Op.cit.*, p. 25

[30] Kamil Zvelebil, *The Poets*, pp.64-65

[31] Braj Ranjan Mani, *Op.cit.*, pp. 155-156.

[32] Similar folk stories are also popular among the people of Po<u>nn</u>imalai region that Po<u>nn</u>imalai Siddha, a disciple of Bōgar, pissed on the hill, and it became gold. Therefore, the hill is named as Po<u>nn</u>imalai, meaning 'Golden Mountain'. It is located some 5 kms to the south of Āyakudi village of Pa<u>l</u>a<u>n</u>i taluk in Dindigul district of Tami<u>l</u>nādu. The hill is located exactly in the southeastern side facing the Pa<u>l</u>a<u>n</u>i hills, which is clearly visible from Po<u>nn</u>imalai. Besides, Zvelebil also recorded about such kinds of practices of the Siddhas. See Kamil V. Zvelebil, *The Poets*, p.79

We can drink the seven-fold seas and belch out the air.
We can count even the countless sand. Oh serpent!
Dance before the great Lord! [33]

The Tamil̲ Siddhas challenged the very foundations of medieval Hinduism. For instance Siddha Śivavākkiyar in a fiery language repudiates the authority of the *Vēdas* and *Āgamas*, the sanctity of temples and the value of worship in them. *The Stone "is like a vessel and spoon, which at any time, does not know the taste of food cooked in/with them. But you, yourself with your inner heart know about Him more, which you do not realize"*[34]. The Siddhas transcended artificial barriers and prejudices, as rightly pointed out by Kaṉiyan Pūṅkuṉṟanār, 'Every village is the village of my birth and everyone is my kith and kin' (*yāthum ūrē, yāvarum kēḷīr*).

The Tamil̲ Siddhas advocates the three highest roads to liberation in their writings such as Upaniṣadic knowledge, *yōgic* technique, and devotion (*bhakti*). But it is difficult to integrate these three into one whole. However, the crucial and central point in the philosophy of the Siddhas is the fact that they understood liberation as the conquest of immortality in this life[35]. The ultimate goal of the Siddhas is attaining *mōkṣa*. The term '*mōkṣa*' in Sanskrit generally means liberation, joy and union. It represents a totally different way of experiencing ourselves and our relationship to everything else.

Macchamuṉi

Matśyēndranātha is glorified as the second *Guru* of the Nāth tradition and also the *Guru* of Gōrakṣanātha. He is popularly referred in many of the Tamil̲ works as Macchamuṉi. Macchamuṉi, a distinguished poet and philosopher, is also considered as the contemporary of Agastya; but nothing further is known of him. Part of the legend about him is that he was thrown into the sea by his parents, because he was born on an unlucky day, and swallowed by a fish; this is obviously an etymological legend to explain his name. Another tradition says that while inside the fish, he overhears a secret conversation between Śiva and his consort on spiritual matters but is cursed by the goddess to forget it all in the land of women, from which his disciple

[33] Pāmbāṭṭi Siddhar Songs, Verses 27-28, pp. 248-249; quoted in S.N. Kandaswamy, *Op.cit.*, p.52
[34] Śivavākkiyar Songs, Verse 482, p. 78
[35] Kamil. V. Zvelebil, *The Poets*, p. 58

Gōrakṣnāth rescues him[36]. He is credited with many Tamil̲ works, big and small, such as *Macchamuṉi Nidānam – 800; Macchamuṉi Kāviyam-800* and *Macchamuṉi Vaippu-800*. But none of these works are helpful to a historian[37] to find out the biographical details of this Siddha. One of his compositions is the *Vāda Nighaṇdu* a treatise on the nostrums and mysteries of alchemy, which appears to have been once much cultivated among the Tamils[38].

Gōrakkar

Gōrakkar is also known Gōrakṣanātha and Gōrakhanātha, one of the *Navanāthas* of north Indian tradition. He is the disciple of Mīṉanātha. He is a teacher of *haṭhayōga* who lived sometime between 900 and 1225 CE. Gōrakṣnāth is however the most famous Nāth *guru* and all later Indian traditions make him the incarnation of Śiva, but his place of origin and date are both uncertain[39]. The name Gōrakṣa not only indicates the influence of Nāthism on the *Kāyasiddha* school of Tamil̲ country but also subscribes to the view of S.M. Punekar[40] that several later followers of Gōrakṣanāth called themselves after their master's name. S.B. Das Gupta says[41] that the followers of Gōrakṣanāth spread the Nātha movement all over India. There are many theories about the date of Gōrakṣanātha, in the academic circles. But the general consensus is that he can be date to 10th-11th Century C.E[42].

But some scholars dated him based on the reference made by Abhinavagupta (10th century?), in which he identifies a Matśyēndranāth or Mīṉanāth as Gōrakṣnāth's *guru*. Svātmārāma's *Haṭhayōga-pradīpikā* lists Gōrakṣnāth as the fifth or sixth in spiritual descent from Matśyēndra and the direct disciple of Mīṉa. A later date for

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[36] J. L. Brockington, *A Short History of Hinduism*, OUP, Delhi, 1992, p. 155

[37] R.Venkataraman, *A History of Tamil Siddha Cult*, Ennes Publications, Madurai, p. 54

[38] Simon Casie Chitty, *The Tamil Plutarch*, Asian Educational Services, New Delhi, 1982 (rep.), p. 58

[39] Gōrakhnāth has become virtually the patron deity of the *Gūrkhās* of Nepal. See J.L, Brockington, *Op.cit.*, p. 155

[40] S. M. Punekar, 'Notes on the sixth chapter of Siddha Siddhānta Paddhati" in *Studies in Indian History and Culture*, p.400

[41] S.B.Das Gupta, *Obscure Religious Cults*, pp. 375 f. The influence of Nāthism in the Tamil̲ Country is probably as early as the *Tirumandiram*, in which Tirumūlar declares that he himself became a Nātha by the grace of the Nandi. See *Tirumandiram*, verse 130, p.57.

[42] Kalyani Malik discusses different theories of the historicity and chronology of the Nātha Siddhas such as Mīṉanātha, Gōrakṣa, Jalandhara Nātha, Bhartṛhari, Jñānēśvar, Gambhirnāth etc. See *Siddha-Siddhānta Paddhāti and other works of the Nātha Siddhas,* Oriental Book House, Poona, 1954, pp.9-14

Gōrakṣnāth is based on the Genealogy of Jñāndev, the author of the Marathi classic *Jñānēśvarī,* which was believed to be written in the year 1290. Jñānadēv claims to be the third in spiritual descent from Gōrakṣnāth. This placed Gōrakṣnāth to the early 11th century. So far, no reliable data on the life of Gōrakṣnāth exist[43].

Gōrakṣnāth and Matśyēndranāth are included among the eighty-four *siddhas*, who belong as much to Buddhist Sahajiyā tradition as to the Śaiva tradition of the Kānphatās. The Kānphatās also include them among the so-called nine *nāths*. Many works in Sanskrit and in Hindi on *haṭhayōga* are attributed to him. Important among them are the *Siddha-siddhānta-paddhati* and the *Gōrakṣa-śataka* in Sanskrit and the *Śabadi* and *Gōrakṣbodh* in old Hindi. The *Gōrakṣa-śataka* (Hundred Verses of *Gōrakṣa*) is one of the basic texts of *haṭhayōga*.

Naccinārkkiṉiyar (14th Century) in his commentary on one of the earliest Tamiḻ literatures, the *Sīvakacintāmaṇi*, mentioned that references about the Gōrakṣa are found in the *Siddharārūḍam*. According to the *Paḻaṉi Sthalapurānam* (C.E. 1628) Gōrakṣa visited Paḻaṉi and performed many miracles. Besides, the Tamiḻ tradition connects him with the forest of Saduragiri as well and mentions that he was the contemporary of Bōgar[44]. It is said that he was the first siddha who used opium for medicinal purposes. On this account opium came to be known in Tamiḻ as *Gōrakkar Mūli*. He is credited with the authorship of *Gōrakkar Vaippu*[45].

Besides these, there are many myths, legends and various sacred centres are connected with the Siddha Gōrakṣa. In Puduchērry also a village called Kōrkādu is connected with Gōrakṣanātha and every year during the Tamiḻ month of Cittirai, the

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[43] However, he is the subject of many fascinating legends, portraying him as a great *yōgin* and wonder-worker. The majority of these legends were most popular among the Hindu sect known as the *Kānphatā Yogīs*. They are also called as *nāths* and *nāth siddhas*, who were the chief exponents of the doctrine and practice of *haṭhayōga.* It is said that Gōrakṣnāth doctrine was first propounded by the god Śiva. Śiva imparted the doctrine to his wife, Pārvatī on the milk ocean. Matśyēndranāth disguised as a fish and surreptitiously listened Śiva's teachings. Therefore lord Śiva cursed Matśyēndranāth to forget what he had learned. As a result, Matśyēndranāth became ensnared by the charms of the women of the mythical land of Kadalī and forgot the doctrine. His disciple Gōrakṣnāth disguised himself as one of the dancing girls of Kadalī and broke his *guru's* enchantment through the words of his songs.

[44] The *Agattiyar-12000* says that Saduragiri is the abode of the Nāthasiddhas. Evidently, Saduragiri has a pond called the *Gōrakṣa tīrtha*, a dip in which will cure all ills. R. Venkataraman, *Op.cit*., p. 53.

[45] V. Ramachandra Dikshitar, *Op.cit*., pp. 162-167; see also Simon Casie Chitty, *Op.cit*., p. 51

annual celebrations were conducted in his name[46]. Similarly, at Vadakku Poigainallūr near Vēḷḷaṅkanni, a big *Samādhi* shrine is dedicated to him and believed that he attained his *Samādhi* here nearly about 300 years ago.

It has been shown earlier that both the Vaiṣṇava and the Śaiva saints shared a common animosity aimed at the rooting out of the Jain and the Buddhist sects. For many centuries, they remained as exponents of a parallel movement of these; the Cōḻās after Parāntaka I (907-955 C.E.) deliberately followed Śaivism which was proved to be a more efficacious instrument of acculturation for acquisition of a wider popular base, particularly by the efforts of the Nāyaṇmārs. Subsequently, due to royal patronage of the *liṅga* cult, there was of central importance in the process of acculturation. Besides, Śaivism along with its iconography evolved in direct relation to the specific requirements of the ideological needs of Cōḻa power[47]. The Cōḻa period was also marked by certain other developments in the religious landscape of the south. *Mathas* were established as schools or centers for study and meditation, often in alliance with certain temples. However, the religious landscape of south India was not monolithic. Many protest movements and reinterpretation of the established religious orders were formed. One such movement led by a group of mendicant ascetics who claimed to worship Śiva was the movement of the Siddhas (cittars), who eschewed visits to temples. Mostly, they lived in isolated areas and practiced an indigenous form of medicine and mysticism. Many of them defiled the human body, at the same time as a medium of accessing the divine powers in them[48].

Hindu society could accept any religious practice. With the arrival of the Muslims, the Hindu religion became chiefly behavior-oriented. The tradition of pilgrimages, vows, fasts and oblation rituals became its core. In this, in the east and north, the most powerful sectarian tradition was that of the *Nāth Panthi yōgis*. They attracted the people's attention by means of various *siddhis*, who were popularly

[46] Very recently (March 2014), there aroused a rumour in Kōrkādu village that a *liṅga* was unearthed in a newly established plot and propagated that in that place only Siddha Gōrakṣa attained his *jīva samādhi*. In this plot, a hut was constructed and a *liṅga* was placed in it to portray that place as the *jīva samādhi*. But this is purely a newly created myth to promote the sales of the plots. Similarly with the same motto, a shrine dedicated to the Sāi Bābā of Shridi was constructed in a new established in plot in the neighbouring Uṛuvaiyāru village, which attracted the people to buy their plots there.

[47] R. Champakalakshmi, *Religion, Tradition, and Ideology: Pre-colonial South India*, OUP, New Delhi, 2011, p. 75

[48] Fred W. Clothey, *Religion in India: A Historical Introduction*, Routledge, London, 2006, p. 98

known as *Siddhas*, *Sādhakas*, and *avadhūtas*. They were worshippers of a transcendent form of Śiva or a *nirguṇa* Brahman and their worship was by means of meditation or trance.

Therefore, in course of time, there was an assimilation of beliefs, rituals and practices between the religious sects; particularly between the *Tāntric* and *Vēdic* cults, in which popular and tribal cults were assimilated, adapted or reinterpreted in the mainstream orthodox traditions[49]. The elaborate rituals of so-called *kaula mārga* with blood sacrifices, meat and wine offerings were also advocated by several well-known Brahmins with Abhinavagupta as the first and foremost. For non-dualistic Śaivas ultimately there was only one reality. Thus, the distinction between purity and impurity was considered as ontologically false. The offerings of polluting substances were therefore sanctioned by the above stated syncretic philosophy. On the other hand, *Tāntric* rites that required transgression or ordinary customs were followed primarily by groups of ascetics residing in cremation grounds. In later tradition of householders instead of polluting substances their symbolic equivalents were usually employed.

As time passed, due to the popularity of the Siddha cult, many of the *vaidika* practices like chanting mantras were assimilated with these kinds of folk elements. The chanting of mantras towards the deity had some cosmogonic power. *Vidyā,* the magical speech was used in *tāntric* ritual which centered around mostly on goddess. In this ritual, the body was symbolically used in the *yōgic* tradition by performing *Kuṇḍalini Yōga* and *Prāṇayāma* were an aspect of *haṭhayōga*. Besides, gestures or *mudrās* with postures or *āsanas* of various kinds were used ritually[50].

The sacred credentials of non-*Vēdic*, tutelary deities were raised to a higher order due to their worship by the dominant cultivating groups of a locality, without divesting them of their local significance. The dominant landed sub-castes thus strengthened their local control. Simultaneously, vertical, horizontal or spatial integration of the agrarian region was strengthened by the linkage of all such tutelaries to local Śaiva shrines. Through these, they were linked to the great regional

[49] Sarah Caldwell, *Oh Terrifying Mother*, Oxford, 2005, p. 252

[50] Fred W. Clothey, *Op.cit.*, p. 110

Śaiva centres, thus homogenizing great temples of all India fame with very local shrines in order to establish the numerical strength of these temples. With the changing socio-economic context from the 12th century, apart from traders, artisans and craftsmen were increasingly reviving their earlier affiliations with folk and popular deities and their worship. In that way, the local cults of Murugan̲, Amman̲ and Gaṇēśa, were elevated to the higher traditions.

Haṭha Yōga

The *Haṭhayōga-pradipikā* by Svātmarāma (15th century) describes various complex postures (*āsana*), breath control, and 'locks' (*bandha*), which are the muscular constructions of breath and energy which flow through the body[51]. *Haṭhayōga* pays particular attention to the acquisition of supernatural powers and the conquest of disease and death. Majority of the extant texts of *Haṭhayōga* are associated with the Nāth siddhas. The Tamil̲ Siddhas of about the 10th to 15th century also wrote poems on the concepts of *Haṭhayōga*[52].

Kuṇḍalini Yōga

Almost all Tamil̲ Siddhas described the practice of *Kuṇḍalini yōga* in different names. Their songs describe *Kuṇḍalini yōga* in a very different, difficult and obscure language which should be understood only by an initiated or an experienced scholar. Particularly Siddha Pāmbāṭṭi, one of the most celebrated Tamil̲ siddha who largely deals with this *Kuṇḍalini yōga*, refers the serpent to the *Kuṇḍalini* power, which passes one's subtle body through six *cakras*. The serpent or *Kuṇḍalini* is also sometimes defined as 'base fire' (*mūla kan̲al*) in many of the Siddha's songs. Thus the term and practice of *Kuṇḍalini* too plays an important role in *Tāntric* Siddha cult. A Siddha was named as Kuṇḍalini Siddhar or Kuṇḍalini Māmun̲ivar at Tiruvakkarai near Vil̲upuram. Most interestingly, Avvai, a female Siddha also too experienced and explained about this *Kuṇḍalini yōga* in her songs. In many of the Siddha's work, the term *yōga* primarily refers to the *Kuṇḍalini yōga* only. Śivavākkiyar, the most famous among the Tamil̲ Siddhas is also mentioned about this *yōga* in many places. For instance, one of his songs describes this *Kuṇḍalini* power as a vital air as follows:

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[51] Other texts of note are the *Gherandha Samhitā*, the *Śiva Samhitā* and, probably the oldest Nāth text, the *Siddhasiddhānta Paddhati*. These texts are concerned with the more subtle levels of meditation and emphasize more on body disciplines. See Gavin Flood, *Op.cit*, pp.98-99

[52] Mircea Eliade(ed.),*Encyclopedia of Religions*, vol.6, pp.213-214; See also Gavin Flood, *Op.cit.*, p.98

There is a wandering vital air,
It flows through all the living frame.
If with your mind you seize this breath
And lift it to your head, its force
Will make the old man young again.
New strength will come to weakened limbs,
By Siva and his lovely wife I swear
That every word I say is true[53].

Khēcarī Mudrā

Khēcarī mudrā is the *yōgic* process of drinking the nectar from the *sahasrāra*. The *khēcari mudrā*, is performed to stop the nectar of immortality (*amrta* or in Tami̲l, *Kāyapāl*), dripping away through the 'tooth' or the 'palate centre (*talu-cakra* or uvula, known as the 'royal tooth'), by turning the tongue back inside the palate and enter in the cavity leading into the skull. The *Haṭhayōga-pradipikā* details how this is to be achieved by cutting the membrane which connects the tongue with the lower part of the mouth and gradually stretching the tongue. The dripping of the nectar of immortality from the crown of the head through the *talu-cakra* is not only regarded as a metaphor for the attention flowing out into the world, but at one level is taken literally, and the *khēcarī mudrā* is meant to stop this flow[54]. In some of the texts this secretion of nectar from the moon is associated with the rousing of *Kuṇḍalini Śakti* and it is held that the rousing of *Śakti* in the *Sahasrāra* is instrumental to the trickling down of the nectar, and sometimes *Śakti* herself is depicted as the drinker of the nectar. Drinking of wine and eating of meat, which are indispensable to a *Tāntric Sādhaka*, are explained by the *Nāth yōgins* as the drinking of the nectar from the moon and turning the tongue backwards in the hollow above" [55].

Kambaḷi Saṭṭaimuṉi refers to this process in his poem. The uncoiled *Kuṇḍalini Śakti* animated by piercing each of the lotuses, absorbs into itself the regnant *tattvas* (the five elements) contained in each of them. When the ascent is made each of these *tattvas* enters the state of dissolution called *laya* state. In her upward process absorbs in herself all the twenty-four *tattvas*. When the process of this ascent reaches the *ājña cakra*, one gets the *siddha dēha* which is not troubled by any of these *tattvas*. He

[53] *Śivavākkiyar Songs*, Verse No. 4, Charles E. Gover, (Trans.), *The Folk Songs of Southern India*, Higginbotham & Co., Madras, 1872, p. 175

[54] Gavin Flood, *An Introduction to Hinduism*, p.100

[55] S.B.Dasgupta, *Obscure Religious Cults*, pp.242-243

further says that one attains *kāya siddhi* when one drinks this *amṛta*. One who drinks the nectar obtains 'bodily immortality' and has entered a stage where his 'body' has been transformed into supreme bliss. This stage of the *yōgin's* body is called *mantra taṇu* or *praṇava taṇu*. Leaving the *ājña cakra* when it reaches *sahasrāra* the *yōgin* becomes conscious of Consciousness, and obtains the *divya dēha*, an illuminated body of knowledge and wisdom. Rōmariṣi says that the *divya dēha* will blaze like a light[56]. In fact, in the final limb of *Aṣṭāṅgayōga* known as *samādhi*, the practitioner raises the *śakti* dormant in his *mūlādhāra*, and unites her with Śiva in the mystic sphere known as the *sahasrāra*. Immortality is attained as he partakes of the ambrosia that flows from the *sahasrāra* by means of *khēcarī mudrā*[57].

Kudambai Siddha in a very obscure way sung in his poem about this nectar- *Kāyapāl*. He says that '*māṅkāipāl uṇdu malaimēl irupōrkku thēṅkāipāl ēdhukkadi*'[58], here it means no other milks or nectars are not required to those who drank the *kāyapāl* and living in the top of the hill, here the top may be the *sahasrāra*, and the *māṅkāipāl* may be the nectar oozing from the *sahasrāra* by the end process of the *yōga*. Tirumūlar also describes this *khēcari yōgam* in a separate chapter in his *Tirumantiram*. The 18th chapter of the 3rd *Tantra* of *Tirumantiram* consists of 26 verses[59] dealt with the *khēcari yōgam*. In these 26 verses, Tirumūlar elaborately explains about the importance, method and effects of the *khēcari yōga*. For instance, in one of the songs he says that the nectar (semen) drops in the centre of the forehead without allowing it to go downwards, one has to try to lift it upward to the top with the help of *prāṇayāma*, which is here called as nectar of the sky[60].

In these songs, Tirumūlar says that with the help of *Kuṇḍalini*, one has to lift the nectar from *mūlādhāra* to the top of head and consume it. One who tasted the nectar live for many years and never face the death. They never get the grey hair, always feels youthfulness with their golden body. He also described the method of tasting that nectar by folding back the tongue. Tirumūlar called this nectar by various

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56 T.N. Gaṇapathy, *The Philosophy of the Tamil Siddhas*, p. 132

57 Maithili Thayanithy, *The Concept of Living Liberation in the Tirumantiram*, p. 37

58 *Kudambai Siddhar Pātalkaḷ*, Verse 28, p. 271

59 *Tirumantiram*, verses 779 to 804, pp. 330 - 339,

60 '*Ūnūṛal pāyum uyarvarai ucchimēl, Vānūṛal pāyum vagaiyaṛi vārillai, Vānūṛal pāyum vagaiyaṛi vāḷarkku, Thēnūṛal uṇdu theḷyalu māmē*'. Here *ūṛal* means fountain. *Tirumantiram*, verse 784, p. 332

names as *ūnīr, thēnīr, Gaṅgai*, etc. Śivavākkiyar also described about the *Khēcari mudrā* in a very obscure language in one of his songs[61]. Thus, the *khēcari mudrā* plays an important role as the final destination or ending process of the *Kuṇḍalini yōga* which gives a Siddha an immortal life.

Folk Traditions

Folklore[62] provides an extensively rich treasure of information about the Siddhas, their attitudes, their *yōgic* experiences, their philosophical teachings, etc., and also explains their socio-cultural systems, beliefs, values, attitudes, religion, superstitions, customs and traditions through their songs, which portrays contemporary life, documents traditional behavior, reinforces systems of belief, etc[63].

Regarding the study of history of the Siddhas, their real histories in many places are mixed up with myths. In some other cases these myths are developed as their history. Therefore it is too difficult to separate these two and bring out the real historical facts from those myths and legends. The myths and legends of the *Purāṇas* brought meaning to people's lives. At the same time, both legends and *Purāṇas* were often intertwined or associated with significant historical facts. These texts are considered as an important media of mass education in the Hindu world.

By the late 12th century C.E., many *Purāṇas* were created by incorporating legends, myths, and customary observances, which are mostly focused on stories of the gods Brahma, Viṣṇu, and Śiva who were also considered to be one god with three functions viz., creation, preservation and destruction respectively. Among various *purāṇas*, only eighteen are considered to be sacred and called as *Mahāpurāṇas*. But many of the minor *purāṇas* were referred to as *Mahātmyas* or *sthalapurāṇas*, which were mostly composed during the 19th century, which glorified gods, goddesses and places of pilgrimage.

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[61] *Kākkai Mūkkai Āmaiyār edutturaitha kāraṇam, Nākkai ūṉṟi uḷvaḷaittu jñāna-nādi ūdupōi, Ēkkai Nōkka atchuram iraṇḍeḻuttum ēttidil, pārthapārtha tikkellām parabrahman āṉathē. Śivavākkiyar Songs*, verse 411, p. 68

[62] The term "folklore" was coined in 1846 by an Englishman, William John Thomas, replacing the earlier awkward term "popular antiquities" that had been derived from the root German word *vooklehre*, which means the study of the customs of the people. See Deep Punia, *Social Values in Folklore*, Rawat Publications, Jaipur, 1993, P. 11

[63] Deep Punia, *Social Values in Folklore*, Rawat Publications, Jaipur, 1993, p.11

The illiterate people are not ignorant or inarticulate. They have listened to holy men, great epics and remarkable stories repeatedly told by their forefathers, down the ages. Later, they have assimilated these stories with their own thoughts and emotions, which have all the richness of the soil and reflect the culture of a community[64]. Similarly, oral narratives are the products of the common people. Many of these narratives are changed according to the present atmosphere, culture and the conditions of the society. From the ballad itself, we cannot understand the actual historical content. Therefore these should be analysed critically in order to get a reliable history of the past. The belief that the Siddha are immortals and that these continue to live in caves and jungles that are beyond the reach of man is prevalent even today.

From the chronological point of view, the existing Siddha mythologies are comparatively recent stories and extremely archaic. Besides, the popular legends and vernacular literatures created around the Nāthas and the Siddhas give expression to the real spiritual longings of the Hindu people who are already in search of their personal deities[65].

Pāmbāṭṭi Siddhar sings about the unlimited capabilities of the Siddhas, like wonder-working Siddha in his songs[66]. Like Pāmbāṭṭi Siddhar, Gōrakṣnāth says that he could control Hari-Hara, he could stop the course of the planets in the heavens; he could submerge the earth in water, with its mountains and cities, and again drink up the waters in a moment, and compared himself with Lord Śiva. Similarly each of the Siddhas of North India having legends ascribed to them with incredible magic powers such as Gōrakṣnāth fed 25,000 *yōgins* and disciples on a single grain of rice; Hādi Siddha recites a *mantra* on a broom; instantly countless brooms fall from the sky and sweep the market-place. as he sits in the royal park meditating, coconuts fall before him; he drink the milk and eats the pulp, and lo, the nuts return to their places in the trees; he makes the sun and the moon his earrings, and so on. Similarly this universal magical tradition also imitated in the Tamiḻ region, which resulted in the emergence of different kinds of supernatural beliefs and myths[67].

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[64] S.M.L.Lakshmanan Chettiar, *Folklore of Tamil Nadu*, National Book Trust, New Delhi, 1973, p.144

[65] Mircea Eliade, *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom*, p. 302.

[66] *Pāmbāṭṭi Siddhar Songs*, Verses 27-28, pp. 248-249; quoted in S.N. Kandaswamy, *Op.cit.*, p.52

[67] Mircea Eliade, *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom*, p. 302.

Siddha Writings and Poetry

The Siddha writings consist of confusing and complicated matters in the Tamiḻ literature and culture. One can come across such of their poems here and there in many parts of the Tamiḻ region. The songs of the Siddhas are truly great poems. But their writings are not in the nature of clear-cut formalized statements of any well-defined doctrine; hence it is difficult to extricate a philosophical system out of their writings, at least at the present state of our knowledge of their works; but it is possible to point out a few essential features, and one day, when their writings are better known, it should be possible to state their philosophy more explicitly[68].

The most common feature that found in almost all Tamiḻ Siddhas is, they protested against caste and Casteism. However, they were not social revolutionaries who aiming at a radical structural change of the Hindu society. Speaking roughly, the two characteristic features of the social attitude of the Siddhas are anti-casteism, and anti-Brahmanism, particularly a strong opposition against the Brahmans, because of their observance of certain kinds of rites and their practices like external purity. They disregarded, ignored, and despised the social fabric of their times. Some of them dreamt of a future age when there would be no castes. For instance, Pattirakiri lamented that 'O when will come the time when we shall live without divisions into castes?'[69]. Similarly, Paṭṭinatār sang his experiences of both social and mystical in a very simple language even an ordinary illiterate person can also understand it. The Tamiḻ Siddhas sang their mystic experience in their songs in a popular language. But all of them are written in double entendre, with popular words and esoteric in meaning. Therefore, it is difficult to extract all sorts of reliable and comprehensive theological and philosophical system from the writings of the Tamiḻ Siddhas. For instance Śivavākkiyar sang his mystic experiences and the evils of the society in his period in very simple language[70]. In this aspect, Śivavākkiyar went further and directly condemned the Brahmans who were responsible for it. Further, he says that

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[68] Kamil V. Zvelebil, *The Smile*, p. 227

[69] Pattirakiri Songs, Verse no. 124, p.191. Here the page No. followed by the Verse No. denotes the work of Tha. Kōvēndhan, *Siddhar Pātalkaḷ*, Pūmbukār Pathipakam, Chennai, (6th edn) 2001. (henceforth Kōvēndhan)

[70] M. Arunachalam, 'Literary Heritage – Medieval Period', in S.V. Subramanian and V. Veerasami (eds.), *Cultural Heritage of the Tamils*, International Institute of Tamil Studies, Madras, 1981, p. 19; for more information about the Avvai and his *tāntric* works, see S.N. Kandasamy, *Op.cit.*,

there is no distinction between a *Pariah* and a *Brahmin* women 'in flesh, skin or bones', and that one may experiment this lack of distinction by simply sleeping with both of them[71]. He denies the objective reality of caste[72]. Some centuries earlier, the same attitude prevailed in the ancient Tami<u>l</u> society and it was condemned by Avvaiyār, the Tami<u>l</u> poetess who is also considered to be one of the Woman Siddhas of Tami<u>l</u>nādu. She wrote the two philosophical books *Jñānakkuṛaḷ* and *Vin̲āyakar Akaval*. The second is very popular among the Śaivas. She says that there are only two 'castes' among men: the generous and the ungenerous.

While speaking about the songs of the Siddhas, A.L. Basham says that, "The Śaivites produced a new devotional literature by the hymnologists called Sittars or Siddhas. Their innumerable songs gained great popularity, and, in their fierce monotheism and equally fierce condemnation of idolatry, they arrayed themselves against the powers of orthodoxy"[73]. It is doubtless that the authenticity of the revealed songs of the Tami<u>l</u> Siddhas are most respectable because they are the instructions and inner experiences of the great Siddhas, which are coming down to us from a long past. Though the strong strain of asceticism in found Tami<u>l</u> Śaiva religion, it was fully developed in the Siddhānta philosophy and the Siddha Cult, which is represented in hymns in which the body and the senses are portrayed as obstacles to the devotee in his or her efforts to realize the Lord's grace. Images of revulsion for the body, and for decay and death, dominate some poems[74]. Almost all of the Siddhas' songs were composed in the twilight language (*sandhyā bhāśa*), a sort of double language in which more than one secret sense could be concealed below the surface meaning[75]. In addition, they often acted as singers, magicians, healers, physicians, all rolled into one and tried to mitigate people's miseries. Their love of humanity is manifested in their word and act, is revealed by the lines of Tirumūlar's 'May world be as happy as I am' (*Yām peṭṭra In̲bam peṛuka Ivvaiyakam*). This brings out the majestic concern for all

[71] Śivavākkiyar Songs, verse 35, in Kōvēndhan, *Op.cit*, p.14

[72] *Ibid*., verse, 42, in Kōvēndhan, *Op.cit*, p.15

[73] A.L. Basham, *A Cultural History of India*, OUP, Delhi, 1975, p. 278

[74] Indira Viswanathan Peterson, *Op.cit.*, p. 207

[75] Nupur Chaudhuri and Rajat Kanta Ray, 'Eros and History: Sahajiya Secrets and the Tantric Culture of Love', in Irfan Habib (ed.), *Religion in Indian History*, Aligarh Historians Society, Tulika books, New Delhi, 2007, p. 106

human beings[76]. He says that there is only one god and only one human race (*onrē kulam oruvanē Dēvan*):

One Race, One God
Think of good and there is no death
There is only one faith you can reach without shame
Think of this to make your thought of God to survive[77]

They rebelled against all forms of establishment using rough, rugged, and paradoxical languages. Apart from mystics, they were the great rebellions who revolt against the exploitation of the ignorant people of the society. These Siddhas served as guiding spirits to all those who groped their way in this area of darkness. This led to their unpopularity in the midst of the religious orthodoxy. Therefore these rebels were hated, criticized and their scientific experiments were taken for black magic and mistakenly they were treated as Devil's disciples. They had a strong preference for the colloquial or people's language. Because of their multiple yearnings and unresolved doubts including their passion for spiritual accomplishments and their desire for social awakening and transformation, they had to invent a language that can be appreciated in context. Their idioms and diction appear to be highly esoteric and contradictory, that give their cultural adversaries an excuse to label them as mystics. It is right to consider that Siddhas hated classical Tamiḻ. Therefore their poems are overflowing with popular epigrams which carry the colloquial expression and vocabulary of the common people[78].

However, some of the Siddhas expressed their mystical ideas using popularly well-known metaphors often used by the local people such as tamarind fruit, lotus flower, mustard seed and other well-known medicinal herbs. The songs of Tirumūlar are impregnated with a high concentration of thought and wisdom. Devoid of emotions and folk tunes they became compilations of esoteric formulae.

The philosophical ideas of the Kaśmir Śaivism are sometimes found in the writings of the Siddhas. But then whatever their indebtedness to foreign sources it is

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[76] Braj Ranjan Mani, *Op.cit.*, p. 161. See *Tirumantiram*, verse 147, p. 63

[77] *Tirumantiram*, verse 2066, p. 823; M.D. Muthukumaraswamy, 'Removing the skin of a tamarind fruit': Rebellion and mysticism of Tamil Siddhars', in *Indian Folk Life*, National Folklore Support Centre, Chennai, Vol. 1, Issue 1, July, 2001, pp. 3-4.

[78] Braj Ranjan Mani, *Op.cit.*, pp. 161-162.

undeniable that the As already mentioned, the Siddha poetry is characterized by its folk tunes, irreverence, esoteric composition, highly localised metaphors and anti-establishment, which highly contributed to their exclusion from the mainstream academy[79].

Poetry was not the primary concern of the Siddhas. The rhythm of their stanzas is simple, robust, unrefined, and reminiscent of folk songs. One of them, Pāmbāṭṭi Siddhar sings verses in the meter used by snake-charmers. Itaikkāṭṭu Siddhar sings as if he were a shepherd. They use many colloquial forms. Whenever the Siddhas use ambiguous language, it is on purpose; they are obscure because they want to be obscure. Their obscure language is an important device by the means of which they can at the same time address both a casual listener as well as an adept of greater spiritual awareness who reads a deep mystic interpretation into their verses. Thus the dancing *pāmbu* 'snake' may be interpreted as one's own heart or soul; the *akappēy* is the demonian in one's own soul or the devil of human mind, etc. In fact, these texts are considered as a closed mystic treasure-box which is bound by the lock of ignorance, and only a practicing *Siddha yōgi* is able to unlock the poems and reveal their true meaning.

Since they lived in different parts of Tamiḻnādu, they do not seem to have come together. However, they are all familiar with one another or their works. For example, Siddha Pattirakiri requested his guru Paṭṭiṇattār to allow him to accompany him, but the latter refused. Even though they lived separately; they are united in their ideologies. Their voices against certain sorts of social evils are almost identical with each other. Similarly, they expressed their perceptions, experiences and mystic ideas to the common people in a highly enigmatic language. Their poetry is basically religious, philosophical, mystical and free from the usages of complicated classical idiom. In order to attract the ignorant village folks and teach them God-realisation, most of the Siddhas used the popular rhythm of speech. For example, Pāmbāṭṭi Siddhar sings verses in the metre used by the snake charmers. Itaikkāṭṭu Siddhar addresses his mind as the *pēy* or ghost. Kudambai Siddhar addresses his mind as a lady wearing an ear-stud. No wonder the songs of the Siddhas are still in vogue

[79] M.D. Muthukumaraswamy, *Op.cit.*, pp. 3-4.

among the village folk for they probably relieve them of drudgery and fatigue of their daily routine.

The Siddhas have indicated how one may identify the hypocrites in the garb of a Siddha. Śivavākkiyar equates the Siddhas with the *jñānis* (cittarāna *jñānigal*)[80]. He defines a *jñāni* as one who excelled in the practice of *Kuṇḍalini-Yōga*[81]. The mind of the *jñāna-yōgins'* is free from pollution, who are liberated from the cycle of births and deaths, even if they cohabit with the fair sex[82].

Vālmīkar expresses disdain for the hypocritical so called Siddhas using strong language. According to him these so-called Siddhas used to grow matted locks and to wear tiger's skin, ascetic robe, etc. They besmeared their body with sacred ashes. They passed for an *yōgin* and *jñāni*. They used to utter lies that they performed *Śivapūjā* and *dīkṣā* (purificatory rites) and they saw Tirumāl (Viṣṇu) face to face. They used to wander in the jungle. Such people were many. In order to earn their livelihood, the so called Siddhas pretended to have originated the four-fold *Vēdas*, six-fold *Śāstras*, eighteen *Purāṇas* and *Vēdānta* texts and they established the four-fold caste system with many sects and groups. In the Siddha text, *Vālmīkar Jñāṉam* a clear definition of a Siddha is given: He, whose mind is crystal clear, is a true Siddha. He, who has realized that all the world and the beings are nothing but Śiva is exactly a Siddha. Hence, the main equipment for a Siddha is purity in mind, word and deed. Purity, serenity and perfection are the hallmarks of a true Siddha.

Kāgapusuṇḍar was another Siddha who also ridiculed the deceitful pretenders who boasted themselves as Siddhas. They offered spiritual instruction to the disciples and cunningly seized money from them. They uttered unbelievable lies. Only those who practiced *yōga* perfectly and worshipped the Lord offering flowers were the real Siddhas (*meijñāni*)[83].

Further, Agattiyar envisaged that a Siddha should be able to control his life-breath (*prāṇa*) through the aid of *Vāci-Yōga*. In addition, he mentioned that he was

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[80] Śivavākkiyar Songs, verse 171, in Kōvēndhan, *Op.cit*, p.34

[81] *Ibid*., verse 324, in Kōvēndhan, *Op.cit*, p.56

[82] S.N. Kandaswamy, *Op.cit*, p.50

[83] *Ibid*., p.51

one who attained the state of silence, the symbol and the upper limit of *jñāna*, withdrawing all his senses from the contact of objects. Further, he must be bereft of all the triple defilements viz., lust, hatred and illusion, the products of *māyā*. A Siddha is a liberated person (*mukta*). He burnt the *śāstras*, giving importance to *Jñāna-yōga*. Tiruvaḷḷuvar also categorically stated that a perfect Siddha transcended the levels of four-fold *antahkaraṇas* viz., mind, intellect, ego and consciousness. Saṭṭaimuṉi explicated that the Siddha was a *jñāni* who destroyed totally the impurity of impressions in the consciousness.

Koṅgaṇar, Karuvūrār, Saṭṭaimuṉi and others emphasised on the perfection of *Kuṇḍalini-Yōga* being the primary requisite of a Siddha. They expected that a Siddha should be a votary of *Śakti*. Koṅgaṇar also endorses the same view in the line, *cittargaḷ pōṛṛiya vālai peṇṇām*[84]. Saint Aruṇagiri, the great mystic and devotee of Lord Muruga frequently extols the glory of *Śakti* in his immortal *Tirupugaḻ* in glowing epithets. Some of them are *Mākāḷi*, *Vālai*, *Śakti*, and *Vāmi*. The Siddha Kāgapusuṇdar takes shelter unto the feet of the Siddhas who are devoid of the three-fold impurities and who are endowed with omniscience. This sort of faith is common also in Śaivism. A true devotee of Śiva regards the *bhaktas* on a par with Śiva Himself[85]. In another text, *Karuvūrār pūjāvidhi*, the Siddhas are depicted to be the staunch devotees of *Śakti*, who is projected as *Kaṉṉi* (virgin), *Vāmi* (she who partakes the left part of Śiva), *Śivakāmi* and *Rūpi*. Further, he states that those who experience her are verily the Siddhas. Self-experience with the reality is often spoken as a true mark of a Siddha. Pāmbāṭṭi Cittar describes the wonderful Siddha as one who is capable of arousing the coiled energy (*kuṇḍalini-śakti*) from the *Mūlādhāra*, passing through the the six *ādhārās* and finally annexing the same with the thousand-petalled lotus (*sahasrāra*), thereby drinking the drips of nectar and experiencing insatiable bliss. He pervades the whole universe like the Absolute. Pāmbāṭṭi is the only Siddha who named the philosophy of the Siddhas as Siddhar Siddhāntam.

Among the other Siddhas found on the southern list are the authors anti-establishment, anti-ritual, anti-caste, anti-brahmin, non-devotional, relativistic and pessimistic. The best known of these Siddhas are Śivavākkiyar, Paṭṭiṇattār and

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[84] *Koṅgaṇa Siddhar Pātalkaḷ*, *Vālaikummi*, verse 3, in Kōvēndhan, *Op.cit*, p.274

[85] S.N. Kandaswamy, *Op.cit.*, p.52

Pāmbāṭṭi Siddhar. They and the other Tamiḻ siddhas were wandering *tāntric* adepts who sang in rough popular idiom about the abuses of society, the glory of God, and the need to seek freedom and immortality by means of *yōgic* practices[86]. The Siddhas preached the common folk that God cannot be found in temples or in the stone images, but they can be known and realized only by intense concentration of the mind which weeded of all its grossness of desire and attachment. They rebelled against the nauseating caste system, sickening superstitions, foolish fanaticism, repelling rituals and the loathing interpretation of the *Vēdas*, *Āgamas*, and *Mantras* by the Brahmins and the intimidating tales they wove to admonish any free thinker. These rebels invariably believed that all religious perpetuate ignorance. Religion has always tried to establish a dogma and the established dogma only created confusion. The value of religion lies in the effect it has on us and the extent to which we believe in it.

Apart from social concerns, Tamiḻ Siddhas were also famous for their indeginous medical system known as *Siddhavaittiyam*. Some of the Tamiḻ Siddhas were both poets and physicians, who were vitally interested in human body and its health. The Siddha medical system (*siddhavaittiyam*) claims to be original practice which seems to have been concerned primarily with herbs and other organic drugs. In addition to herbs they make much use of salts, metals, mineral poisons etc., in short of elements of an organic nature. Sometimes it is said that the three basic methods of Siddhas medicine are *maṇi*, *mantiram*, and *maruntu*, i.e. astrology, reciting mantras and using drugs. However, according to some more modern exponents of *Siddhavaittiyam*, the Siddha therapy consists of *yōga āsanas*, *mudrās* and *bandhas* (locks), Sun baths, and taking of medicinal drugs[87]. Therefore the Siddhas were celebrated as great physicians, philosophers, anatomists, chemists, and savants noted for their wide travel, simple living and high thinking. They were capable of performing metallurgy and alchemy of converting base metal into gold and metals are converted by them into medicinal compounds in powder form or solid components of high potency. They have the capablity of living and dying at will. They are not easily identifiable, even though they may wander among the public. They are reputed to have used certain herbal leaves to intoxicate themselves and get into a trance or

[86] Peter Heehs (ed), *Op.cit.*, p. 283

[87] Kamil V. Zvelebil, *The Smile*, p. 223

hypnotic state. Most of their works are written in a secret code, which mostly dealt with longevity and eternal youth, through sixty-four types of arsenics[88].

Various kinds of chemicals used by Bōgar, a Tamil̲ *Dan̲vaṇtri* (mythical divine doctor), are said to be very effective in treating diseases. Powdered gold, silver and other metals, extracts from pearls and corals, and juices of herbs are still made use of by manufacturers of Siddha medicines in the Pal̲an̲i area of Madurai district. Like Pal̲an̲i, several places in Tamil̲nādu are rich with medicinal herbs.

The Siddha medicine is believed to have many many spectacular qualities of treatment[89]. Thus, the Siddha texts are basically found with obscure, esoteric and mysterious teachings which also carry valuable health tips and medical treatises. They were the repositories of all sorts of human life and values. Therefore, almost their texts have no commentaries, no expository literature, and no handy editions. Some of them illustrate the futility of human endeavour, stretching out its hand in quest of the evading spirit[90]. For example, Śivavākkiar's famous lines against the people going around and around the planted stones in the temples are good examples from a big corpus of poetry against rituals and mechanical practices[91]. Religious practice for him would mean removing inner attachments like the skin of tamarind fruits and building up an inner god of psychic rhythm[92]. This inner god would resonate with the music of the universe consisting of infinite empty space, minerals and plants that vibrate with

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[88] S.M.L. Lakshmanan Chettiar, *Op.cit*, Magic and Medicine, p. 62

[89] *Marma Tailam*, an oily preparation from herbs, is applied to the body before going to bed. After hot bath the following morning, symptoms of relief are said to be marked. Gingelly oil is boiled with small quantities of chillies and turmeric and the body is anointed with this liquid compound and given a warm bath. Boiled nutmeg is powdered and consumed with a plantain-fruit to stop dysentery. The skin of the fox is heated in the oven and devoured with honey to relieve whooping cough. Cooked raw rice flour mixed with turmeric powder is boiled and used as bandage material to cure abscess formed in any part of the body. For sore-throat, leaves of the drumstick tree are powdered, the juice extracted and applied to the throat along with *chuṇam*, the lime consumed with betel-leaves. Ginger, turmeric, onion, mustard, nutmeg, cloves and other spices are consumed along with food for their medicinal properties. The water-content of rice kept overnight is drunk with salt, turmeric and asafetida every three hours, as a tonic. The stem of the banana plant is used for urinary troubles and prostrate enlargements. Even today, some rich persons are said to consume *Taṅga Baspam* or powdered gold to get over the handicaps of old age.

[90] S.M.L. Lakshmanan Chettiar, *Op.cit.*, p. 142

[91] "*Setting up a stone, calling it God, offering a few flowers, Going around and mumbling words-what is this mantra? Will a set-up stone speak, while the Lord is within? The pot and ladle used for making curry', will they know its taste?"*; Śivavākkiyar Songs, Verse No. 482, p. 78; in S.M.L. Lakshmanan Chettiar, *Op.cit.*, p. 143

[92] Pattirakiri Songs, verse No. 53, p. 186

the chemical complexes of the brain and casteless people who would embody the evolutionary urges in human beings[93].

On the other hand, A<u>l</u>ukaṇi Siddhar criticizes the human body as a filthy salt pot[94]. Many of them are pessimists and harp on the impermanence of things but hope to attain immortality. They are far from being polite to the brahmanical priesthood and orthodoxy. Traces of Siddhas' thought and expression can be seen in the songs of Paṭṭiṇattār more particularly in his disciple Pattirakiri and also in the songs of Rāmaliṅga Swāmi and Subrahmaṇia Bhārathi. An interesting thing in the Siddha cult is, it does not recruit followers[95].

The Siddha Tradition

Though it is difficult to determine the beginning of the Siddha tradition in Tami<u>l</u>nādu, their basic aspects like *Yōga* and *tāntrism* are truly archaic and pan-Indian. Whenever the 18 Siddhas are enumerated traditionally in Tami<u>l</u>nādu, one begins with Tirumūlar. Tirumūlar is undoubtedly one of the direct and most influential forerunners of the movement. Then we may say that he was followed by Śivavākkiyar, Pattirakiriyar, Pāmbāṭṭi, Iṭaikkāṭar and Paṭṭiṇattār, who were flourished between the 10th-15th Century C.E[96]. As often mentioned in this study, identifying or determining the chronology of the Tami<u>l</u> Siddhas is difficult due to the lack of proper historical sources. However, scholars who have already worked on this topic classified the period of those Siddhas, as the earlier and the later siddhas. The ealier siddhas belong to the hymnal period. They lived in between 6th and 10th centuries and then the later siddhas lived in between the 16th and 17th centuries. Besides these, there is a separate list of Siddhas found in the songs of *Koṅkumaṇdala Satakam*. Then after, as a continuing tradition, many mystics and poets and other miracle makers are

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[93] M.D. Muthukumaraswamy, *Op.cit*., pp. 3-4.

[94] "*The body is filthy, my dear, a salt-pot it is; To get into a new body-the prescription I do not have; If such medicine, I secure. Will I not leave this frail body and attain Thy feet, Oh, dear Mother!*" See A<u>l</u>ukaṇi Siddhar Songs, Verse No. 8, p. 215, quoted in S.M.L. Lakshmanan Chettiar, *Op.cit.*, p. 143

[95] N. Subrahmanian, *The Tamils:*, Madras, 1996, p. 107

[96] Kamil V. Zvelebil, *The Smile*, p. 221

included in the list of Siddhas. Some well known of them are Tāyumāṉavar, Rāmaliṅgar, Ramaṇa, Bhārathi, Aurobindo and so on[97].

Agastya

In the Tamiḻ Siddha tradition, Agastya (Agattiyar in Tamiḻ) is celebrated as the pioneer of the Siddha cult as well as father of a Tamiḻ School of medicine[98]. Many of the Tamiḻ Siddhas trace their origin to Agastya. Invariably, there exist many local traditions and fabulous myths on him. Almost all of the available sources accepted that he belonged to the Vindhya Hills in central India, later he travelled to south and settled at Podigai hills[99] of the present Thirunelvēli District. But, there are no proper historical evidences for the study of biography of Agastya. *Maṇimēkalai*, one of the Tamiḻ epics, mentions that Agastya drank the River Ganges in anger, when the floods destroyed the sacrificial fire in his cottage, and then released it in the name of River Kaveri to the southern lands[100]. *Maṇimēkalai* also tells about the miraculous birth of the sage and his relation to Vaśiṣṭha. The first reference to Agastya as the "Father of Tamiḻ" and the first Tamiḻ grammarian is found in Nakkīrar's commentary to Iraiyaṉār's *Akapporuḷ* (8th century C.E). Then, commentators like Nacciṉārkkiṉiyar (14th century) and Pērāciriyar (c.1300 C.E.), narrate a number of Agastya-stories and make him the '*Sage of Potiyil'*. It is obvious that one or more Siddhas assumed the name of the ancient, legendary riṣi and there exists a number of works on medicine and alchemy, but also poetic works, ascribed to an Agastya[101].

Similarly, a verse in the *Sthalapurāṇa* of Tiruvāṇmiyūr temple, nearer to the present Chennai also confirms the Agastya's travel to the south and his settling in Podigai Hills. It says that the presiding deity of the Tiruvāṇmiyūr temple asked

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[97] But, Kirubānanda Vāriyār, an ardent devotee of Lord Muruga, who lived in the second-half of the 20th century, is not included in the list of Siddhas. Even though, he didn't performed any magic or miracles, he has all essential qualities to be considered as a Siddha, by the way he lived. However, somebody considered him as the 64th Nāyaṇmār of the canonized Śaiva saints. But to many of the scholars, he was a great devotee of lord Muruga.

[98] V. Ramachandra Dikshitar, *Op.cit*., pp. 162-167

[99] The term *Podigai* itself is a corruption of *Podu Ill*, (*Podu* means Common and *Ill* means House) which means and signifies a village commons or a place where the community people assembled to meet and discuss matters of administrative importance and course of just action. See S.A. Sarma, *Op.cit*., p.52

[100] S.A.Sarma, *Op.cit.*, p.52

[101] Kamil V. Zvelebil, *The Smile*, p. 222

Agastya to proceed to Podigai Hills and there find and take possession of the sacred Bead of Mercury, the *sutha guḷikai*, which bestows all occult powers[102]. This might indicate that his journey southward was not wholly for the purpose of disseminating the teachings of the Himalayan tradition of the Siddha school, as claimed popularly, or for the purpose of reforming the Tamiḻ language and writing its first grammar, but for the purpose of gaining possession of the alchemically perfected Mercury Bead, the famous *sutha guḷikai*, the ideal of all students of Siddha teachings. The hilly region of Podigai abounds in *mahā auṣadhis* or medicinal plant-life consisting of high alchemical powers and healing potencies, such as *kal tāmarai* or the stone Lotus, which is to be found only here.

According to another tradition, Agastya married Lopamudrā and had a son named Sāgaren. He led the first colony of Brahmans from the north and settled in southern India under the auspices of Kulasēkara Pāṇdya, the founder of Pāṇdyan dynasty of Madurai[103]. There prevails a fable that during the time of Śiva and Pārvathi's marriage, all the Gods and sages assembled together in the Imaus mountain, therefore northern part of the earth became depressed and southern part got elevated. Therefore, Lord Śiva sent Agastya to the *Pothigai* hills of south to equalize the earth[104]. This incident was also recorded in the verse of the second *Tantra* of *Tirumandiram*[105].

When Agastya left the court of Kulasēkara Pāṇdya, he is stated to have assumed the ascetic life, and to have retired to the *Pothigai* Mountain. It is said that, he arranged the Tamiḻ grammar based on Sanskrit principles and earned the name '*Tamiḻ-muṉi'*. Besides, it is also believed that he authored a lakh of verses on theology, alchemy and two lakh verses on medicine. Many of the works on mysticism, worship, medicine and alchemy are attributed to his genius. But language of these attributed works is too modern and not much earlier to the 15th century C.E.

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[102] *Sthalapurāṇam of the Tiruvāṇmiyūr temple*, *Marundīsa paṭalam,* the song says that:
Śuddhamuru Muṉivarane!; Nī pondārundol podigai Varaiyumūla vāndu kānbāi
Yittagay sūthamadu vāyk- Kappenariniya gamana guḷikai

[103] But the real date of the existence of the king Kulaśēkara Pāṇdiyan, by whom he was patronized, is not known. See Simon Casie Chitty, *Op.cit*., p. 2

[104] See also S.N. Kandaswamy, *Op.cit.*, p. 6

[105] *Natuvunillātu ivulagam sarintu/ Ketukinratu emperumān eṉṉa īsan*
Natu ula aṅgi Agattiya nī pōy Mutukiya vaiyattu muṉiru eṉrāṉe. see Tirumandiram, verse,323, p. 145

It is an established usage among the Siddhas to assume the names of the seers of ancient time[106]. Agastya is said that he taught the different arts, medicine, astronomy, chemistry and other sciences to his twelve disciples[107] and others. With the noble presence of Agastya they are engaging in daily deliberations with the local dignitaries and the elite, learning their ways and in exchange, imparting his own wisdom concerning the Siddha tradition as obtained in the Himalayan school. In course of time *Podigai* must have developed into a veritable Academy or a centre of learning[108].

Interestingly, in the name of Agastya, many grammarians, poets, Siddhas and physicians existed at different intervals of time. There had been a Vātāpi Agattiyar, one Muttur Agattiyar, a Kudagu Hills Agattiyar of Paraśurāma times, one Pañcavaṭī Agastya who is said to have assisted Lord Rāma in his south ward ventures, a Dvārapati Agastya who married Lopamudrā, the princess of Vidarbha and who was a contemporary of Alarka the king of Kaśi who lived some twenty generations before Rāma, as also a person named Agastya who married Yaśomati, the Princess of Camboja. Further, based on his physical appearance, he is also known as *Kuru Muṉi* and *Kuda Muṉi*[109]. Besides, in the name of Agastya hundreds of manuscripts and books especially on *Yōga*, medicine, astrology, spiritual knowledge, etc., are available.

Nandi

Nandikēśvara, popularly known as Nandīsar or Nandi is considered as the chief attendant of Lord Śiva. In the northern tradition, he is known as Rṣabha. According to *Śiva Mahāpurāṇa*, Ṛṣabha and Bhṛgu were the first who initiated into the great *Śivayōga*. Tirumūlar in his *Tirumandiram* paid homage to Nandi in more than ten verses claiming that he belongs to the spiritual lineage of Nandi. Due to the grace of the Nandi, he entered into the body of the Mūlan. By his grace, he became the Sadāśiva. By his grace, he attained all kinds of physical knowledge and because of

[106] Simon Casie Chitty, *Op.cit*., p. 4

[107] The names of those twelve disciples are Tolkāppiyar, Adankōtāsīrīyar, Turālingar, Semputcheyar, Vaiyābigar, Vāippiyar, Panambārar, Kaḻārambar, Avinayar, Kākaipādiniyār, Nattattar and Vāmanar. But only a few particulars are known about them. See Simon Casie Chitty, *Op.cit*., pp. 1-3

[108] S. A. Sarma*, Op.cit.*, p.52

[109] *Ibid*., p.49

his grace Tirumūlar remained in the world[110]. He also says that, it is because of the grace of the Nandi, he got the appellation of Nātha[111]. Along with Tirumūlar, the *Sanakādi* brothers - Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanatkumāra and Sanatsujāta[112], who are known as *mānasa-putras* (the Mind-born sons) of Brahma; and the other two sages Patañjali and Vyāgrapāda were all instructed by Nandi in the great *Śivayōga* teachings.

Tradition holds that Nandi was the chief exponent of Indian tradition of Dance. He was identified with *Taṇḍu* and as an author of the *Nāṭyaśāstra*, a treatise on dance and the name *Tāṇḍava* was given to the dance of Śiva. Nandi is also regarded as the first exponent of *rasa* theory and Vātsyāyana acknowledges him as the first author of *Kāma*. A grammar of articulated languages, known as *Nandikēśakāśikā,* also is ascribed to Nandīsa as its author. This work is is not available now. There exist several stories about him that he played on his *damaru* to keep the time-bearers, when Lord Śiva is involved in his cosmic dance at Chidambaram. Interestingly, the Jaina system of philosophy and practice claims one Ṛṣabha as its founder. There is a chance to say that this Ṛṣabha as the Nandi of Tamil̲ tradition; with the spread of Jaina school into the Tamil̲ lands, as shown by the two epics of *Silappadikāram* and, *Maṇimēkalai* in Tamil̲ literature[113].

Thus, Nandi remained as a great exponent of the Tamil̲ Siddha cult and guided the great Siddhas like Tirumūlar, who is responsible for the formation of *Mūlavarga* in Tamil̲ Siddha tradition. To the Hindu devotees, Nandi means, a sacred bull which is installed in front of the sanctum and sanctorum and also the vehicle of Lord Śiva. In the present context, none worshipped Nandi in context of a Siddha. In fact, most of the scholars ignored Nandi from the list of the Siddhas.

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[110] *Nandi aruḷālē Mūlani nādippin, Nandi aruḷālē Sadāśiva* nāyinēn,
Nandi aruḷālē meyjñānathuḷ naṇṇēn,Nandi aruḷālē nānirunthanē. Tirumantiram, Verse 156, p. 68

[111] *Nandi aruḷālē Nāthanām pērpeṛṛōm, Nandi aruḷālē Mūlanai Nādinōm,*
Nandi aruḷāl thenseiyum Nāṭṭinil, Nandi valikāṭṭa Nānirun thēnē. Tirumantiram, Verse 130, p. 57

[112] *Nandi aruḷpeṛṛa Nātharai Nādidil, Nandikaḷ Nālvar Śivayōga Māmuni*
Manṛu thol̲uda Patañjali Vyākramar, enṛivar ennodu eṇmaru māmē. Tirumantiram, Verse 129, p. 57

[113] S.A. Sarma, *Op.cit*., pp.36-37

Tirumūlar

Tirumūlar was a celebrated Siddha, an ascetic and philosopher. Like all other Siddhas, dating the period of Tirumūlar is also difficult as well as some of the sources claim that he was a contemporary of Agastya, and like him exerted himself in diffusing the worship of Śiva amongst the Tamils. Since he is included in the list, he might live before the *Tēvāram* authors, Tirugñāṇa Sambandar, Tirunāvukkarasar, and Sundarar. Some scholars opined that Tirumūlar lived around 5th century C.E. and some of them placed him in the 6th or 7th century. R. Venkataraman opined that the actual evolution of the Tami̱l Siddha cult begins with Tirumūlar's *Tirumantiram* (c.10th-11th Century)[114]. The *Tirutoṇḍar Purāṇam* mentions him as one of the sixty-three Nāyaṇmārs. Since he is admitted in the list of sixty-three Nāyaṇmārs, Tirumūlar is also called as Tirumūla Nāyaṇār[115]. It is said that he was a cow-herd at Sāttanūr[116], previous to his assuming the ascetic life, and establishing himself in the Śaiva fane at Tiruvāvaduturai. His medical treatise is known as *Tirumūlar Vaidya Vāgadam*. But he is most famous for his *Tirumantiram*, a voluminous work containing an exposition of the tenets of the Śaiva religion, especially with reference to the four different forms of worship, as enjoined in the *Āgamas*[117]. To the orthodox followers of Tami̱l Śaiva Siddhānta, he is a semi-divine founder-figure, and also is revered as one of the sixty-three *Nāyaṇārs* or Tami̱l Śaiva saints. In addition, he is an authority on *tāntric* theory and practice, giving a more detailed exposition of the *aṣṭāṅga yōga* than Patañjali. Finally, he is regarded as the first of the Tami̱l *Siddhas*[118].

The historicity of Tirumūlar as Tami̱l Siddha and his integration with Śaiva tradition is so far not established. The curious story of his origin making him a northern

[114] R. Venkataraman, *Op.cit*., p. 42.

[115] The prefix *tiru* means "revered," and Mūlan is his proper name. The term Nāyaṇmār signifies the status of a canonised saint. It also means "leader" or "master", is applied to sixty three Śaiva saints. The most celebrated among them are Appar, Sambandar, Sundarar and Māṇikkavāsakar. They were born in the seventh and eight centuries in central and northern Tami̱lnādu. The hymns of the first three saints make up the *Tevāram*, and last one's is *Tiruvāsakam*. The songs of the Nāyaṇārs are treated as fundamental texts of the Śaiva Siddhānta school of philosophy. For more details see Peter Heehs (ed.), *Op.cit*., p. 305

[116] "*Kudi maṉṉu Sāttanūrk Kōkula mēippōn kurambaipukku// mudimaṉṉu kūnaṟ piṟaiyāḷan Tannai Mu̱lutami̱lin padimaṉṉu Vēdattin Soṟpadi yēpara vittenucchi//Adimaṉṉu vaitha pirānmūla nākinṟa Aṅkaṇanē"*. *Tirumantiram*, *Tiruvandādi*, p. 63

[117] Simon Casie Chitty, *Op.cit*., p. 113; but V.R.R. Diskshitar give the same legend as Tirumūlar saw the cowherd at Tiruvāvaduturai, instead of above said Sāttanūr. See V.R. Ramachandra Dikshitar, *Op.cit*., pp. 116-124

[118] Peter Heehs (ed.), *Op.cit*., p. 283

Siddha who came to south India and became a cowherd through an act of transmigration, may be taken as a pointer to the anxiety of the hagiographers to include people of low origins among the sixty-three Nāyaṇmārs[119]. Tirumūlar is also called as Tirumūlanāthan and considered to be the follower of Nātha-Siddha tradition. He himself says that he got the agnomen '*Nātha'* by the grace of Nandi, '*Nandi aruḷālē Nāthanām peyar peṛṛōm*'[120]. Besides, as like the *Kaula* tradition of the Nāthas, he also extols the greatness of Śakti in his fourth *tantra*, which is almost exclusively *Śakta* in its outlook[121]. He himself says that '*Bhuvanāpathiyām Aruntava selviyai sēvittu adiyēn parindudan vanthanan*'[122]. Tiruvāvaduturai *Purāṇam* and Sēkkiḻār's *Tiruttoṇdar Purāṇam* provides some information about Tirumūlar's life. Besides, *Tiruttoṇdar Tiruvandāti* of Nambiyāṇdār Nambi; and the name Sundaramūrti in the *Tiruttoṇdarttokai* of the *Tēvāram* also refers to him. As a predecessor of Sundarar, he must have flourished at the commencement of the 9th century C.E[123].

However, the legends of Tirumūlar in certain matters are in controversy and many of them are mere fabrication. For instance, he lived for 3000 years and mastered the art and science of *parakāya pravēsa* (one of the *aṣta-siddhis*, often advocated by the Siddhas); and he undergone the trans-migratory process and enter the body of the cowherd Mūlan, etc. Tradition says that at Sāttanūr, he saw a herd of cows weeping over the corpse of Mūlan, a cowherd, who had died being bitten by a snake. The *Yōgi* left his body in a safe place, transmigrated into the body of Mūlan and led the cows to their respective houses. But this 'Mūlan' refused to return home in spite of repeated imploring by his wife, but entered a *maṭha*. When she sought the interference of the elders of the village, they examined 'Mūlan', found out that he had turned a sage and advised her to allow him to go his way. When the *yōgi* searched for his original body

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[119] R. Champakalakshmi, 'From Devotion and Dissent to Dominance: The Bhakti of the Tamil Āḻvārs and Nāyanārs', in David N. Lorenzen (ed.), *Religious Movements in South Asia: 600 – 1800*, OUP, Delhi, 2004, p.60.

[120] *Tirumantiram*, verse. 130, p.57; here the verse No. and the page No. are given based on the work '*Tirumantiram'* published by the South India Śaiva Siddhāntha Works Publishing Soceity, Tinnevely, (rep.), 2007

[121] The fourth *Tantra* of the *Tirumantiram*, is exclusively a Śākta section, which is considered as the central teaching of the whole text. It carries 535 verses in thirteen chapters viz., *Ajapa, Tiru Ambala Cakra, Arcchana, Tripura Cakra, Navakuṇḍa, Bhairavi mantra, Pūrna Śakti, Ādhāra Ādhēya, Erōli Cakra, Bhairava Cakra, Sāmbavi maṇdala Cakra, Bhuvanāpati Cakra* and *Navākshari Cakra*. For a brief outline of these chapters, see R. Nagasamy, *Tantric Cult of South India*, pp. 52-62

[122] see also *Ibid*., pp. 48-49

[123] V. Ramachandra Dikshitar, *Op.cit*., pp. 162-167

and found it missing, then he continued to stay in Mūlan's body and wrote 3000 verses collectively known as *Tirumantiram*[124]. Then he went into serious practice of *Siddhayōga* and entering *samādhi*, stayed thus for a whole year. It is reported that he awoke at the end of a year from his *samādhi* and composed a single verse and on its completion, he again entered *samādhi*, to last for another year, at the end of which he would compose another verse. His magnum opus, *Tirumantiram*, a work of three thousand verses, recognized as one of the *Āgamas* in Tamil̲ culture, is said to have been completed by this process[125].

According to another tradition, Tirumūlar's original name was Sundaranār; the name "Mūlan" was obtained as by an accident of history. Sundaranar was one of the alumni engaged in the active practice of the *Siddhayōga* under the direction of the Lord Śiva, and under the guidance of Nandi. It was Nandi that bestowed on him the title "Nāthan" and henceforth was known as Sundara Nāthan[126]. It is as Sundara Nāthan that he first visited south India and arrived at Chidambaram. Again for a second time to visit the great savant and sage Agastya at his select residence in the Podigai hills[127]. Thus most of the scholars seriously take the legend that Tirumūlar has left Mount Kailāś, of the far North and settled in the South.

Based on the information found in the text of *Tirumantiram*, V.R. Dikshitar dated Tirumūlar, after the period of *Tēvāram* trio viz., Sambandar, Appar and Sundarar. Most of the details found in this legend are attested by the internal evidence of the text[128]. That he practiced *Samadhi* under the *Bōdhi* tree, he was an expert in *Āgama Śāstras*[129], and he had seven disciples, viz., Mālaṅgan and others[130]. It appears that these seven disciples faithfully carried the torch of the teacher's message and

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124 R. Venkataraman, *Op.cit*., p.47

125 S.A. Sarma, *Op.cit*., p.42

126 '*Mantiraṅ koṇdu val̲ipaduvōrkku Sundaranāthan solliya mantiram*' in *Tirutoṇdarpurāṇam*, (2:30, 1: 28) quoted in R. Nagasamy, *Op.cit*., p. 47

127 S.A.Sarma, *Op.cit*., p.42; see also K.A.N. Sastry, *Development of Religion in South India*, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1992, p. 45

128 V. Ramachandra Dikshitar, *Op.cit*., pp. 162-167

129 *Nandi Iṇaiyadi Nāntalai Mērkoṇdu, Pundhiyin ullē Pukappeithu Pōṛṛi seithu, Andhi Mathipunai Aranadi Nāḷthoṛuñ, Sinthaiseithu Āgamañj seppalu ṛṛēnē*. *Tirumantiram*, verse 135, p. 59

130 *Mantiram Peṛṛa Val̲imurai Mālaāṅkan Indiran Sōman Brahman Rudran, Kandurk Kālaṅgi Kañjamalaiyanōdu Intha El̲uvarum Enval̲iyuāmē*. They are Mālāṅgan Indiran, Sōman, Biramman, Rudran, Kandurukkālāṅgi and Kañjamalayān. *Tirumantiram*, verse. 132, p. 58; Reference on Mālaṅgan is also found in the verse No. 138, p. 60; and about Kālāṅgi and Kañjamalayān in verse 146, p. 63.

founded in their turn seven Mutts to propagate the *Śivayōga* as such. Kālaṅgi Nāthar is considered to be one of his seven pupils, and Bōgar of Pa<u>l</u>a<u>n</u>i is considered as a pupil of Kālaṅgi Nāthar. The *Koṅgumaṇdala Satakam* mentions that Kañjamalai Siddhar as another pupil of Tirumūlar[131].

The Siddha elements in *Tirumantiram*

The *Tirumantiram* comprised of two words *tiru*, an honorific, and *mantiram*, the Tami<u>l</u> for *mantra* which literally means 'the Sacred Utterance'. It is a vast compendium of philosophy, morality, *Tāntrism*, siddha doctrines and the greatest treatment of *yōga* in Tami<u>l</u> literature, which includes a collection of more than 3000 quatrains arranged in nine *tantras* in the *kalivirutam* meter, divided into four parts viz., *Cariyai*, *Kriyai*, *Yōgam* and *Jñānam*[132] and reflects the theology of the Tami<u>l</u> *Āgamas*. Further it is divided into nine broad sections called *tantras*. The first *tantra* dealt with *upadesa*, the transitory nature of wealth, physical body, and the greatness of non-violence, refraining from drinking intoxicants, etc. The second *tantra* gives the esoteric meanings of some of the manifestations of Śiva, such as *Aṣta-Viraṭṭa*, *Liṅgapurāṇa*, *Pañcakritya* and so on. The third *tantra* deals with *aṣtāṅga-yōga* and *aṣta-siddhi*. The fourth *tantra* deals with *Śakta* traditions and various types of *cakras*. The fifth *tantra* deals with *Cariya*, *Kriya*, *Yōga* and *Jñāna*. The sixth *tantra* deals with *Tapōveśa*, *jñānaveśa* and *Guru Darśana*. The seventh *tantra* deals with the topics like six *ādhāras*, *Śivapūjā*, etc. The eighth *tantra* deals with renunciation, removal of desires, greatness of bhakti, etc. Finally the ninth chapter deals with the *Pañcākśara* and *Śiva darśana* in a detailed manner. Interestingly, the above said all are highly peculiar to the Tami<u>l</u> Siddhas and these characteristic features of the Siddhas are elaborately projected in *Tirumantiram*.

S.N. Kandaswamy gives us the summarised substance of the *Tirumantiram* in his work *The Yōga of Siddha Avvai* as follows:

Siddhas are those who piously perceived Śivalōka (Kailāś) on earth. They realized the principle of nāda (śabda) and its ultimate end (nādānta). They are eternal, pure, and holy who absorbed in unalloyed bliss. They have attained supreme liberation, transcending all the thirty-six tattvas. Tirumūlar named them Śiva-siddhas. After having transcended the thirty-six

[131] Karmega Kavingar, *Koṅgumaṇdala Satakam*, verse 35, (Tamil), in T.A. Muttusamy Konar, (ed.) Sadhu Press, Chennai, 1923, p. 38

[132] V.R. Ramachandra Dikshitar, *Op.cit.*, pp. 116-124

tattvas which constituted the visible cosmos, they entered into the unique Light of Bliss and experienced the inexplicable Śiva, remaining pervasive as Śivam. They become Śiva, then remained seeing themselves in all, witnessing all His acts and having the knowledge of past, present and future and settled in divine tranquility. In one of the verses Tirumūlar stresses the significance of devotion to Śiva. He makes a distinction between a Siddha and a devotee (Bhakta). He attaches much importance to the latter. He says that even the Siddhas standing close to the Lord do not realize the supreme light who bestows beatitude on the sincere devotees whose hearts are over flowed with piety. Siddhas were those who eradicated the five-fold malas, viz., āṇava, karma, māyā, māyēya and tirodhāna thereby attaining Śivahood, remaining in everlasting liberation. They uprooted the bondage of birth, removed from the entanglement of earthly existence and realized the properties of the fresh tattvas. It is pertinent to note that the five malas are mentioned only in Śaiva Siddhānta. The Siddhas are those who attained yōga-samādhi, resulting in the experience of infinite space, limitless light and omnipotent Śakti. The yōgins are eligible to enjoy both yōga and bhōga. Yōgasiddhi results in the attainment of Śivarūpa or in the form of Śiva, while bhōga-siddhi confers the four objectives of life, viz., virtue, wealth, pleasure and bliss collectively known as puruṣārtha. The Siddhayāna was not against family life. The fulfillment of these four objectives contributed to the excellence and perfection of human life. Leading a virtuous life, one can earn wealth through righteous means, enjoy life with wife, children and kindred and finally attain liberation. Besides, he enlists the evolved souls, bestowed with divine grace and listed them in the order as Sāraṇas, Siddhas, Samādhi-yōgins or the realized jñānis and the joyous persons with intense devotion. He also says that Siddhas are those who perceived Śiva in them. Like the water on the lotus, they are untouched by both pure and impure māyā. They are the liberated (mutkas) as well as the source of liberation for the aspirants. They possessed the kuṇḍalini power and also have the features of Sadāśiva[133].

Tirumantiram is known for its obscurity because of its unmitigated use of symbolic terminology[134] which is "in full agreement with the pan-India *Tāntric* usage"[135]. It is in somewhat obscure language and deals with Ākamic Śaivism, *yōga*, medicine, etc. in mystic phrases; and has many other basic components which distinguish the pan-Indian *Tāntric* Siddha schools: the quest of perfect health and immortality in this life; the basic *haṭha yōga* techniques; and the development of *Siddhis*. Though alchemy is not discussed in detail, the alchemical symbol of transmuting iron into gold is mentioned as a simile while dealing with grace of the *guru*

[133] S.N. Kandaswamy, *Op.cit.*, pp.15-17; the reference numbers given by the above author is not tally with the volume published by the South India Śaiva Siddhanta Works Publishing Society, Tinnevely, rep. 2007.

[134] The *Caryāpadas* and the *Dōhas* (8th – 9th Century) of the Sahajiya siddhas employ mystical symbols which mean various things at various levels. In the *Tirumantirām* this trend reaches its culmination in the '*Sūnyasambhāsaṇai'* in the 9th *Tantra*; e.g. 'The brinjal seeds were sown and the bitter gourds grew; when I dug out the dust, I found the pumpkin blossoming"; *Tirumantiram,* 2869

[135] K.V. Zvelebil, The Poets of the Powers, p.79.

as capable of saving one from the cycle of births[136]. Some of the important features, shown in the previous chapter as peculiar to certain *Tāntric* schools, are found in the *Tirumantiram*. For instance, the worship of Bhairava, described by the Tirumūlar[137] is a basic feature of the Kāpālikas and is followed by the Nāthasiddhas. He also describes about the quest for the self-realisation of *Śivahood* in the individual. In his *Pariyaṅka yōga*[138], he advocated the union of man and woman and equating the pleasure there of with *mahāsukha*, the upward elevation of the seminal fluid in the body for attaining *kāyasiddhi*[139] are also discussed in it. The stress on the realisation of *Sūnya* and the devotion to a *guru* are two of the basic features of the Siddha Cult, are also found in the *Tirumantiram*[140].

The principal reason to bring the *Tirumantiram* under the Siddha tradition is many of its stanzas clearly deal with mysticism. The language is obscure, twilight and the matter also not easily intelligible[141]. In *Tirumantiram* there is a separate chapter in the ninth *tantra* called '*Maṛaiporutkūṛṛu'* with typical illustrations of mystical tendencies known as the *sūnyasampāsanai*. Tirumūlar says that when the brinjal (*kattiri*) seed was planted, the bitter gourd (*pākal*) grew out of it. When the earth was dug out, a pumpkin (*pūsaṇi*) blossomed. The gardeners ran to fetch them. But it was a plantain (*vāḻai*) that was fully ripe[142]. This is the literal meaning of the stanza. But what underlies this is of enormous importance. The brinjal in Tamiḻ is *kattiri* which also means a pair of scissors[143]. This is the *paribhāṣa* or the customary language employed by this school. For instance the word *Kattiri* stands for briñjal, scissors, cutters, and a species of snake and also for the period of hottest summer days.

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[136] *Ibid*., p.29.

[137] *Tirumantiram*: 1267-1272, pp. 498-499. The iconography of Bhairava (*Ibid* : 1269) and the ingredients for his worship (ibid: 1271) are described here.

[138] *Pariyaṅka Yōga* means bedstead *yōga*, see *Tirumantiram*, 19th chapter, 3rd *Tantra*, verses 805-824, pp.339-346

[139] *Tirumantiram*, 704-719, pp. 308-313.

[140] *Tirumantiram*: 2456 and 2461, pp. 1000-1003. These mention the three fold *Pāl* or *Sūnya* (Vaccum) and a stage beyond these three. All those touched by the *guru* attain *Śivagati* (the state of *Śivahood*) being devoid of all the three *malas* (Impurities); *Ibid*: 2016-2028; pp.798-804; R. Venkataraman, *Op.cit*., p. 43

[141] V.R. Ramachandra Dikshitar, *Op.cit*., pp. 116-124

[142] *vaḻtalai vittida pākan muḷaithathu, puḻuthiyai Tōṇdinēn Pūsaṇi Pūthathu, Toḻuthukoṇdōdinār Tōṭṭakudikal, muḻuthum paḻuthathu vāḻaikkaṉiyē*. *Tirumantiram*, 9th *Tantra*, Chapter 17, *Maṛaiporutkūṛṛu*, verse.2829, p.1174.

[143] V.R. Ramachandra Dikshitar, *Op.cit*., pp. 116-124

Besides, the numeral "five" may signify the elemental compounds (*pañja bhūtas*) to the basic fivefold constitution of the human being[144]. The body is valued as the temple of God, and as a fit instrument for the soul in its career of self-discipline and search of God[145]. Besides, as mentions earlier, the text is often obscure, and contains a wide variety of symbolism, including numerical symbolism in larger.

The land of the Tami<u>l</u>-speaking Dravidian people essentially remains one devoted to the Goddess worship, the 'Vālai Kumari', as shown in the original name of the land, Ka<u>n</u><u>n</u>iyākumari[146]. In the seventh *tantra* of *Tirumantiram*, Tirumūlar gives a detailed concept of *Śakti*. He describes that the first appearance caused in the world by *Sadāśiva* is *Śakti*. The thirty six *tattvas*, and *Bhōga, Mōkṣa, Buddhi, Siddhi*, etc., all the *guṇas*, and all these forms of the universe are *Śakti*[147]. Śakti is the earth and Sadāśiva is the universe. Both Śakti and Śiva constitute the above said thirty six *tattvas*[148]. Sadāśiva with five heads and ten arms is invoked with five *aṅgamantras* viz., *hrdaya* (heart), *siram* (head), *sikhā* (tuft), *kavaca* (sheath) and *nētrā* (eye) and each manifests its *śakti* in different forms. In *hrdaya* mantra she manifests as *Jñānaśakti*; in *Siromantra* she is *Parāśakti*, in *Sikhā* she is *Ādi śakti*, in the *kavaca* she is *Icchā śakti* and in the *Nētra mantra* she manifests as *kriyā śakti*[149]. Further he also describes that *Śakti* in the *pītha* is *Ātma Śakti*; in the *kaṇta* portion is *Vidya Śakti* and the *liṅga* portion is *Śivatattva* and the *Śakti* that manifests in the whole, is called *Sadaśiva*.

An important aspect in *Tirumantiram* is the description of '*Kālacakra'*,[150] a late Buddhist concept that is said to have come from central Asia to India in C.E. 966.

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[144] S.A. Sarma, *Op.cit*., p.43

[145] '*uḷḷam peruṅkōyil ūṉ uṭampu ālayam',Tirumantiram,*verse.1792, p.705; see Kamil V. Zvelebil, *The Smile*, p.228

[146] S.A. Sarma, *Op.cit*., p. 34

[147] *Tirumantiram*, 7th *Tantra*, verses 1684-1685, p. 662

[148] *Ibid*, verses 1707, p. 670

[149] *Ibid*, verses 1714, p. 673

[150] *Tirumantiram* consists of 30 verses in the 14th chapter of the third *tantra* entitled *Kālacakra*; verses 720-749, pp. 313-323. *Kālacakra* is a system of *Yōga* which stresses that (a) the universe, with all its objects and localities, is situated in the body and (b) time with all its varieties (viz., day, night, month and year) exists in the body in its process of the *prāṇā vāyu* (the vital wind). It believes that by *prāṇāyāma* (the controlling of the *Prāṇa Vāyu*) time could be controlled; S.B. Das Gupta, *An Introduction to the Tantric Buddhism*, pp. 74 f. So *Kālacakra* stresses the need for a healthy and strong

Besides, Sēkkiḻār in his *Tiruttoṇdar purāṇam* specifically mentioned that *Tirumantiram* has 3000 verses in it. It shows that the *Tirumantiram* belongs to a period after the 10th century, but before the 12th century[151]. In this work, Tirumūlar says some of the practices which are more familiar among the Siddhas such as *kāya-siddhi*, *prāṇa-siddhi* and *yōga-siddhi*, achieved by the practice of such *mudrā*s as *khēcari*, *bhūcari*, or *amuri dhāranai* and by other means of spiritual *sādhana* such as by *yantras* and *mantras*, directed to the disciplining of the psycho-spiritual entity. The union of the 'Sun' in the *mūlādhara* with the 'Moon' in the *Sahasrāra* of a *Yōgi*[152] and the 'drinking' of the nectar by means of *khēcarimudrā*[153] for *Kāyasiddhi* are described in the *Tirumantiram*. Tirumūlar also explained in his songs about the mode of burying the corpse of a *Yōgi*[154]. The *Tirumantiram* speaks about the 72,000 *nādis* in the human body, with certain musical sounds, that a *yōgi* is said to hear in the course of his *yōgic* practice; he sung:

The sounds of the roaring sea, bell, trumpeting of the elephant, flute
The sounds of the cloud, the droning of the beetle, the dragon-fly, the conch,
The sounds of the kettle-drum and the lute
All these ten can't be felt except by the humble. [155]

Tirumūlar advocates his followers to renounce all attachments and turn the minds towards God. Besides, in his work, he glorifies the potentialities of the human body and affirms the reality of life and the world. He does not believe that the human body is an evil:

If body is destroyed, soul is destroyed;
And one will not attain true powerful knowledge.
Having acquired the skill to foster the body,
I cherished the body, and I fostered the soul[156].

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body for liberation from death; Mircea Eliade, *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom*, p. 204; see also R.Venkataraman, *Op.cit.*, p. 44

151 R.Venkataraman, *Op.cit.*, p. 45.

152 *Tirumantiram*, verses 851-853 and 862, pp. 355-356, 359 respectively

153 In the 18th chapter entitled '*khēcari yōgam'* of the third *tantra*, some 26 songs are dealing with the *khēcari mudrā*. *Tirumantiram*, verses 779-804, pp. 330-339.

154 *Tirumantiram*: 1873-1885, pp.738-742. The burial is graphically described. The body must be made to sit in *padmāsana* (ibid, 1877) and a *liṅga* or a papal tree must be planted on the grave (ibid: 1885); cf., G.W. Briggs, *Gōrakhnāth and the Kānphata Yogis*, pp. 39-41.

155 *Tirumantiram*, verse 586, p. 267; M.D. Muthukumaraswamy, *Op.cit.*, pp. 3-4

156 *Udambār aḻiyil uyirār aḻivar, tidambada meijñānam sēravumāṭṭār, udambai vaḷarkkum ubāyam aṛindhē, udambai vaḷarthēn uyir vaḷarthēnē*. *Tirumantiram*, chapter 13, *Kāyasiddhi Ubāyam*, verse 704, p. 308; see Kamil V. Zvelebil, (2003), *Siddha Quest for Immortality*, Mandrake of Oxford, Britain, p.228

In another stanza, he says that he once considered the human body as abhorrence. Then he found the divine in his body in which the god is dwelling. Therefore he preserved his physical body[157]. Therefore, he says that if body is destroyed, soul or life is destroyed. Hence it is necessary to protect and cherish the body. Similarly, his idea of preserving the human body differs from the later Siddhars and put him under the classification of *Kāya Siddhas*. Tirumūlar informs us that God more readily accepts any offering made to this temple than the offerings made to the stones in the stone temples. Human love is symbolic of divine love. All love is actually a shadow of the great love.

> *The ignorant think that God and love are different; none knows that God and love are the same; did all men know that God and lover were the same, they would dwell together in peace, considering love as God[158].*
>
> *To those of soft hearts, whose minds are melted by divine love, although their flesh be cut off their bones used as fuel, and their moisture dried up wasting in the golden flame, and to those alone it is not forbidden to approach the God, who is the golden jewel of my soul[159].*

Another stanza says that there are five cows in the Brahman's house, roam astray. If they are controlled by the proper herdsman, then all the five would furnish plenty of milk. Here, the cows represent the human senses. This mystic interpretation denotes that one, who wishes to attain the eternal enjoyment of bliss, should keep his five senses under strict control[160]. He also advocates the Brahmins to give up their worldly desires and also says that many of them are not willing to give up their desires even after they read the *Vēdānta*. Further he says that the past life is like a torn sari, which cannot come back again, and our near ones and dear ones are loveless.

> *The Brahmins who wished to listen to Vēdānta*
> *Didn't give up their desire even after listening to it*
> *Vēdānta is the place where desire ends.*
> *Those who listen to Vēdānta are desire less.* [161]

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[157] *Udambinai mun̲n̲am il̲ukkenṟiundhēn, udambin̲ukullē yuruporuḷ kaṇdēn, udambuḷḷē uttaman kōilkoṇdān enṟu, udambinai yān̲irunthu ōmbukinṟēnē. Tirumantiram*, Ch.13, *Kāyasiddhi Ubāyam*, verse 705, p. 308

[158] *Tirumandiram*, Verse 257, p. 112, Simon Casie Chitty, *Op.cit*., p. 114

[159] *Ibid.*, Verse 259, p. 113, Simon Casie Chitty, *Op.cit*., p. 114

[160] V.R. Ramachandra Dikshitar, *Op.cit*., pp. 116-124

[161] *Tirumantiram*, verse 79, p. 33; M.D. Muthukumaraswamy, *Op.cit*., pp. 3-4

Gone is life as the saree is torn.
The near ones became loveless.
No gifts; no loans; no celebration.
Their stride itself lacks the majesty of the city. [162]

Tirumanitram explains salvation in terms of the *Śaiva Siddhānta* trinity of *pati* (Lord Śiva), *Pāsa* (bondage), and *Paśu* (the bound *individual*).

They speak of the Three - *Pati*, *Paśu* and *Pāsa*;
Beginning less as *Pati*, *Paśu* and *Pāsa* ate:
But the *Paśu-Pāsa* nears not the *Pati* supreme:
Let but *Pati* touch! The *Paśu-Pāsa* is as naught... [163]

Thus, *Tirumantiram* remains as a repository of *Śaiva Siddhānta*, though *Vēdāntic* and *Tāntric* thoughts are also enshrined in it. Being a Siddha, he has defined the traits and characteristics of a perfect Siddha in many poems. It contains very many features which are typical for Siddha writings. All of these show the pan-Indian Siddha tradition. Above all *Tirumantiram* is a great specimen for the literatures on Siddha cult. Like Tiruvaḷḷuvar who dealt with all sorts of human life in his *Tirukkuṛaḷ*, Tirumūlar also left no stone unturned in studying and describing all aspects of the *Tāntric* Siddha cult.

Śivavākkiyar

Śivavākkiyar considered to be most rebellious among the Tamiḻ Siddhas, who often ridiculed the established traditions, brahmanical authorities, temple rituals, caste divisions and other social inequalities. He was an eminent philosopher known for his montheistical treatise *Śivavākkiyam*, in which he has attacked and exposed the Hindu religion, and its concomitant superstitions. But the period of his existence is variously stated[164]. Nothing reliable is known about the life of Śivavākkiyar or indeed any of the Tamiḻ Siddhas. The oldest of the group after Tirumūlar, he may have lived as early as the 9th or 10th century. Besides, in some of his songs, he referred about Tillai and its *Ambalam*, and its period of existence may useful to determine the earliest

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[162] *Tirumantiram*, verse 252, p. 110; M.D. Muthukumaraswamy, *Op.cit*, pp. 3-4

[163] *Tirumantiram*, verse 159, p. 70; Trans. by B. Natarajan, quoted in Peter Heehs (ed.), *Op.cit*., p. 283

[164] He was referred to by Paṭṭiṇattār and was praised by Tāyumāṉavar. Some Vaiṣṇavites believe that Tirumaḻisai Āḻvār was the Śaivite Śivavākkiyar before he became converted to Śrivaiṣṇavism. Śivavākkiyar's songs were written in the same metre in which Tirumaḻisai Āḻvār wrote his Tiruccanda Viruttam. The poems of this author must have been growing in number on account of additions from time to time. He may be looked upon as one of the early Siddhas. For more details see Simon Casie Chitty, *Op.cit*., pp. 107-108

period of Śivavākkiyar[165]. There available a collection of 527 stanzas said to be authored by him which is written in a rough, sometimes crude idiom. Disdainful of the *Vēdic* as well as the orthodox Śaiva religion, he sings powerfully of the need to seek God within and not be means of outward ceremonies and observances. Many scholars identified Śivavākkiyar with Tirumaḻisai Āḻvār, one of the twelve Āḻvārs of the Tamiḻ Vaiṣṇava pantheon. The latter says that he was once a Jaina, then a Buddhist, then a Śaiva and lastly became a convert to Vaiṣṇavism[166]. Many scholars concluded that Śivavākkiyar belonged to the 10th century, or still earlier[167]. Based on the lexical style of the songs of Śivavākkiyar, M. Arunachalam opines that (i) there were two Śivavākkiyars and (ii) Śivavākkiyar I, as referred to by Paṭṭiṇattār I, belonged to c.10th century and Śivavākkiyar II the Siddha, belonged to the latter half of the 14th century[168].

The original name and nativity of this Siddha are obscure; it is probable that he was named after *Śivavākkiyam* the name by which the poet himself calls his work. It is also said that since he have uttered the five-lettered spell *Śivāyanama* frequently, he got the name Śivavākkiyar. In many poems, Śivavākkiyar refers to the efficacy of *pañcākṣara*[169]. In the very first poem of the text, he used the word *Śivavākkiyam*, signifying the statement of Śiva. He meant that all his statements were the statements of Śiva. Since the Lord inspires the Saint, pervading his consciousness, he felt that he was only an instrument through which Śiva himself spoke. *Śivavākkiyam* indicates the name of the text as well as the name of the Siddha[170]. However, one scholar suggested that since he has used the refrain *Śivāyam* in more than sixty places in his poems, he

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[165] *Śivavākkiyar Pātalkaḷ*, Verses 82,84, 171, pp. 21,171.

[166] V. Ramachandra Dikshitar, *Op.cit*., pp. 162-167

[167] P.T. Srinivasa Iyangar and A.V. Subramania Ayyar accepts a legend that Śivavākkiyar repudiating Śaivism became a staunch Vaiṣṇavite and attained sainthood with the name Tirumaḻisai Āḻvār (c. 18th century). See R. Venkataraman, *Op.cit*., p. 68

[168] M. Arunachalam, *Tamil Illakiya Varalūru-14th Century*, p. 261-262

[169] In the *pañcākṣara-mantra Śivāyanama*, each syllable connotes an esoteric sense. *Śi* stands for Śiva while *va* denotes *Śakti*. *Ya* indicate the soul, while *na* and *ma* denote the *malas* (impurities). If the soul joins *Śi* and *vā* (i.e., Śiva) it gains eternal bliss. On the contrary, if it goes with *na* and *ma*, i.e., *malam*, it is trenched in the cycle of birth and death.

[170] The whole text, according to the Siddha was Śivavākkiyam and the author, thus became Śivavākkiyar on the analogy that Tolkāppiyam is the name of the Tamil grammatical treatise, while Tolkāppiyar is the name of its author.

acquired the name Śivavākkiyar[171]. This may indeed seem 'closed by the lock of ignorance'. However: the sound *a* (*akāram*) is the symbol of beginning and of the Primeval Lord who is eternal and omnipresent, in many forms; the sound *u* stands for *uru*, *uruvu* which means 'shape, form', i.e. material shapes; the sound *ma* symbolized *mayakkam* 'bewilderment, confusion', also *māyā* 'illusion of creation', and *ci* is of course the first syllable of *civāyam*, i.e. *namacivāyam*, the sacred 'five letters', the mystic formula of Śaivism and *Siddhism*. In other words, the quatrain contains a whole theology: God is the eternal and omnipresent Lord, clad in material forms, dispelling the confusion and ignorance of the world by the mystic doctrine of *namacivāyam*. Schematically in one of his songs Śivavākkiyar illustrate the purposeful obscurity of this Siddha diction

> *'Like so many forms he stands – through the sound a,*
> *having dressed himself in shapes – through the sound u,*
> *the world confused – through the sound ma;*
> *it became clear as civāyam – through the sound ci.'*[172]

a = Supreme God; *u* = in many material forms; *m*(*a*) = in real world existing because of ignorance and *ci* = removed by the doctrine and practice of *civāyam.* Thus, reading the first 'letters' of the quatrain vertically, we get the greatest and the most potent mantra: *a* + *u* + *m* + *ci* = *aum*, i.e. *ōm ci* (*vāyanama*)[173].

In some respects, he is the greatest rebel against religious orthodoxy, sacerdotalism, and the Hindu 'establishment'[174]. He asserts that God is in each soul just like the lightning in the sky which appears in a flash, spreads and disappears. He ridicules the prevalent social customs, rituals and practices, rejects caste divisions and stands for complete equality among men in both religions and social spheres of activity. Many of his poems attacked venomously on almost everything that was held sacred in his time. It was a time when people had the greatest esteem for Brahmin women because of their birth. And the low-caste women were looked down upon.

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[171] S.N. Kandaswamy, *Op.cit.*, p. 59

[172] Translation by Kamil V. Zvelebil, see *Śivavākkiyar Pātalkaḷ*, Verse No. 213 p. 40, Transliteration of the song: *akāra kāra ṇattilē yaṉēka ṉēka rūpamāy; ukāra kāra ṇattilē yurutta rittu niṉṛaṉaṉ makāra kāra ṇattilē mayaṅkukiṛa vaiyakam; cikāra kāra ṇattilē teḷinta tēci vāyamē.*

[173] Kamil V. Zvelebil, *The Smile*, p. 232

[174] *Ibid*, p. 229

'What does it mean – a Paraiya woman? What is it – a Brahmin woman?
Is there any difference in them in flesh, skin or bones?
What is the difference if you sleep with a Paraiya or a Brahmin woman?' [175]

The earliest use of Rāma for God in a monotheistic sense may perhaps be traced to the Tamiḻ Siddhas. In the tenth century, Śivavākkiyar uses both 'Rāma' and 'Śiva' to refer to the eternal Omnipresent God 'described almost exclusively in negative terms'. Revolting against Brahmanical orthodoxy he condemned image worship, repudiated the authority of the *Vēdas*, and rejected the caste system and the theory of transmigration unequivocally[176]. He also rejects the division between Śaivites and Vaiṣṇavites. Again and again he speaks of Rāma but, at the same time, he extolls Śiva and Śaivism[177]. At the same time, he denounces the Brahmanical way of life; he repudiates the authority of the *Vēdas* and condemns idol worship in temples. In total he is a revolutionary to the core. He rebels against religious orthodoxy. He assails the brahmanical way of life and rebelled against the established order of his age. He speaks of those who drag the burden of books and blabber lies. True knowledge is empirical and experimental. To him, *aṛivu* or *ñāṉam* is naturally not the discursive kind of knowledge found in the texts: 'How fluently the lies inspired by books spring from you! But what use are books when you fail to trace the place before your birth and death?'

O you who proclaim yourselves the yōgins of knowledge,
Who search after knowledge in books!
You do not know your own hearts!
There you should search for the light of knowledge!'[178]

Śivavākkiyar's songs still remains as the most powerful voice in the entire collection of Siddha literature. He is mercilessly attacked and ridiculed the priestly orthodoxy. His poems bring out the humanist and anti-brahmanical sentiments which are so characteristic of the Siddhas.

The chanting of the four Vēdas, the meticulous study of the sacred scripts,
The smearing of the holy ashes, And the muttering of prayers,

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[175] *Śivavākkiyar Pātalkaḷ*, Verse No. 33, p. 14; Kamil V. Zvelebil, *The Smile*, p. 230

[176] Suvira Jaiswal, 'Social Dimensions of the Cult of Rama', in Irfan Habib (ed.), *Religion in Indian History*, Aligarh Historians Society, Tulika books, New Delhi, 2007, p. 92

[177] *Śivavākkiyar Pātalkaḷ*, Verses 50,51, 67, 71, 340 and 377 are having the concept of uniting Śaivites and Vaiṣṇavites and also claims that both Śiva and Viṣṇu are same. p. 16-63

[178] *Śivavākkiyar Pātalkaḷ*, Verse No. 444, p. 73,

Will not lead you to the Lord! Let your heart melt within you.
And if you can be true to yourself, then you will join the limitless light
And lead an endless life[179].

You dumb fools performing the rituals with care and in leisureliness.
Do gods ever become stone? What can I do but laugh? [180]

Śivavākkiyar critically questions that, of what use are temples, and of what use are sacred tanks? Slavishly you gather to worship in temples and tanks? Neither a real temple nor a sacred pond exists in the outer world. They in reality exist within you.

'What are temples? What are bathing tanks?
Fools who worship in temples and tanks!
Temples are in the mind. Tanks are in the mind'[181].
'You say that Śiva is in bricks and granite,
In the red-rubbed lingam, in copper and brass!
If you could learn to know yourself first,
The God in temple will dance and sing within you!' [182].

He was generally considered to be an iconoclast because he vehemently decried temple worship at the same time he said that man should make his heart the temple of God. He had scant respect for rituals which in popular belief had become a substitute for love and service to God and to fellow beings. He was a vehement opponent of caste. Almost all the Siddhas believed in the oneness of all creation and they preached a philosophy of love and service and of an inward contemplation; Śivavākkiyar is a shining example of this faith. Some of his verses have the force of a sabre thrust[183]. As like Tirumūlar who says 'Those who say that knowledge and *civam* are two (different) things are ignorant'[184], Śivavākkiyar also identifies *civam*, the Absolute, with *aṛivu*, knowledge. He describes God as *ap parāparam* 'that supreme thing', spread everywhere (*eṅkumāy paranta*), and being within men (*ummul*). One cannot say at all what is God, how he is. God is described almost exclusively in negative terms, in what he is not. This is in sharp contrast with the *bhakti* conception of a personal, individualized God having so many attributes and residing in a particular form in a particular shrine.

179 *Ibid*, Verse No. 33, p. 14; Kamil V. Zvelebil, *The Poets*, p. 84

180 *Ibid*, Verse No. 121, p. 27; *Ibid*., p. 84

181 *Ibid*, Verse No. 30, p. 13; Kamil V. Zvelebil, *The Smile*, p. 230

182 *Ibid*, Verse No. 31, p. 13; Kamil V. Zvelebil, *The Smile*, p. 230

183 M. Arunachalam, *An Introduction to the History of Tamil Literature*, Gandhi Vidyalayam, Tiruchittrambalam, 1974, pp. 261-262

184 Kamil V. Zvelebil, *The Smile*, p. 230

The lazy ones say: Far away, far away, far away (is God).
The parāparam (Supreme Being) is spread everywhere on earth and in the skies.
O you dumb ones,running through towns and country and jungles,suffering in search,
Know well that Godhead is right there within you, and stand still! [185]

Those who are rushing for pilgrimage and running in search of God, Śivavākkiyar say that 'temples are within your minds, temple tanks are within your minds'[186]. If you keep clean your mind and thought, there is no need of uttering *mantras*. The mind, the heart, is the temple of God, and God enters the heart in a mysterious way, like 'coconut water into the coconut shell'. Śivavākkiyar says that the Lord came and made a temple of my heart here, entering it in the same way in which fresh water gets into the reddish young coconut.

The Lord came and entered and made his shrine within my heart
Like the sweet juice that develops within a tender coconut
Seemingly without cause, after the Lord came and entered and made his shrine
Within my heart, I have not said a thing. I am silent before men of this world[187].

Śivavākkiyar explains that god is in very simple form. He is the Supreme Being who is responsible for all forms of life. He is in the form of light and if living beings understand and mingle then they shall have wisdom. From this lines one can understand that the supreme power as light in the inner self[188]. He also tells that those who are in search of God can search for God as light in their inner self and but mostly they won't fail in finding the supreme power[189]. Further Śivavākkiyar says to his poor devotees those who take always sacred baths, kindle sacrificial fires, and one who pour in tons of ghee; and those who hear words of wisdom; that the Fires and holy waters are within oneself. He asks them to behold remember and attest that an endless undiminished light will appear and union in oneness[190].

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185 *Śivavākkiyar Pātalkaḷ*, Verse No. 11, p. 10; Kamil V. Zvelebil, *The Smile*, p. 230

186 *Ibid*, Verse No. 30, p. 13; '*kōyil um ma<u>n</u>atuḷē, kuḷankaḷ um ma<u>n</u>attuḷē*'.

187 '*Ceyya teṇki lēyiḷanīr cērnta kāra ṇaṅkapōl, aiya<u>n</u> vantiṇ ke<u>n</u><u>n</u>ulam pukuntu kōuil kontavan*'. *Śivavākkiyar Pātalkaḷ*, Verse No. 28, p.13; see Kamil V. Zvelebil, (2003), p.147

188 *Śivavākkiyar Pātalkaḷ*, Verse No. 105, p. 24
Āthiyānathu onṛume anēkanēka rūpamāi/ sāthi bethamāi e<u>l</u>unthu sarva jīvan ānathu
āthiyōdu irunthu mīṇdu e<u>l</u>unthu jenmam ānapin/ sōthiyāna jñāniyāgi suthamāi iruppane.

189 *Śivavākkiyar Pātalkaḷ*, Verse No. 3, p. 9
Ōdi Ōdi Ōdi Ōdi Utkalandha Sōthiyai,/ Nādi Nādi Nādi Nādi Nātkaḷum Ka<u>l</u>inthu Pōga
Vādi Vādi Vādi Vādi Māṇdu Pōna Mānthargal,/ Kōdi Kōdi Kōdi Kōdi Eṇṇiṛantha Kōdiyē

190 *Śivavākkiyar Pātalkaḷ*, Verse No. 26, p. 13
Neruppai mūṭṭi neiyai viṭṭu nitham nitham nīrilē/ Viruppamodu Nīrkuḷikkum Vēdavākkiyam Kēḷumi<u>n</u>;
Neruppum Nīrum Ummulē Ninaindhukūṛa vallīrēl/ Surukkam aṛṛa Sōthiyaith todarndhu kūdal ākumō!

Śivavākkiyar employs simple similes to convey his ideas. He cites common place, domestic instances to drive home his point. This is what he does in the following verse while trashing the theory of eternal soul and transmigration[191]. One of the most powerful stanzas of all his poems is the one in which he plainly refutes the theory of transmigration; it deserves to be quoted fully:

'Milk does not return to the udder, not butter to butter-milk.
Nor the life within the sea-shell, when it breaks, to its body.
The blown flower, the fallen fruit do not return to the tree.
The dead are not born, never, never, never!' [192]

Śivavākkiyar also ridicules many ritual and social customs and practices: thus e.g. saliva, which is considered by the Hindus as something utterly unclean, he refuses to regard as unclean in itself. In one of his songs, he questions that why the Brahmins are so fussy about spit. And In another stanza, he describes that all are outcome of spit.

'Why should you be so fussy about eccil, about saliva?
Why – honey is the bee's saliva;
the beetle's spittle is on the flower,
the cow's milk itself is mixed with the saliva of the calf'.[193]
The Vēda you recite is spit. The mantras in it are spit.
All pleasures are but spit. All seven worlds are spit.
Honeyed sperm is spit. Intellect is spit. Enlightenment is spit
There is nothing, indeed, nothing that is not spit! [194]

And he laughs at those who bathe for cleanliness' sake and yet are impure in their hearts[195]. His songs repudiated the caste system and stood for absolute equality of all in the religious and social practices. His great contribution to Tamil̲ literature is probably for the first time in Tamil̲ writing he used the common idiom of the people.

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[191] Braj Ranjan Mani, *Op.cit.*, p. 159.

[192] Translated by Kamil V. Zvelebil, *The Smile*, p. 231; see *Śivavākkiyar Pātalkaḷ*, Verse No. 43, p. 15, Transliteration of the song is:
karanta pāl mulaippukā kaṭainta veṇṇey mōrpukā; uṭaintu pōn̲a caṇkin̲ōcai yuyirkaḷum uṭaṟpukā virintapū vutirnta kāyum mīṇṭu pōy marampukā; iṛantavar piṛappa tillai yillaiyillai yillaiyē.

[193] Translated by Kamil V. Zvelebil, *The Smile*, p. 231; see *Śivavākkiyar Pātalkaḷ*, Verse No. 466, p.76, Transliteration of the song is:

"vaicca veccil tēn̲ alō, vaṇṭi n̲eccil pūvalō; kaiccu tāvil vaittuṭan̲ kaṛanta pālum eccilē".

[194] Translated by Kamil V. Zvelebil, (2003), p. 147; see *Ibid.*, Verse No. 37, p.14,

[195] *Śivavākkiyar Pātalkaḷ*, Verse No. 276, p. 49,

On the whole, he is a powerful, independent, crude and often striking poet, who is definitely worth reading[196].

He variously describes about the *Kuṇḍalini yōga*[197], and about the term *Siṅganāda*[198] in his songs, which are all an essential aspects of the Siddhas. He simply describes about the importance of the Siddhas and their appearance in his songs. He says that the persons who don't know to differentiation between the real Siddha and other fake ascetics would criticize the real Siddhas as madmen. To the Siddhas who roams like a madman don't bother about any other things and equally treat everymen and also consider every land as their own land without any differentiation[199].

At last, Śivavākkiyar concluded his *Śivavākkiyam* with the song telling the importance of uttering the word *Śivāyavasi*, the supreme *mantra.* If one can utter the mantra *Śivāyavasi*, all become possible, even one can reach the space and rule it also. The word *Śivāyavasi* itself the two headed fire[200].

Siddha Avvaiyār

Avvai popularly known as Avvaiyār is a famous Tamiḻ poetess who is also considered to be one of the Women Siddhas of Tamiḻnādu. She was a devotee of Lord Viṉāyka and also a strong devotee of Lord Muruga and many legends and *purāṇas* are available in this regard. She was very much religious who also practised *Yōga*. Really she was an *yōgin* and a Siddha. It is said that when she was taking rest in the precincts of a temple, after a long wearisome journey, the temple priest denounced her for having stretched her feet towards the idol, enshrined in the sanctum sanctorum. She was too conscious that the Lord was an omnipresent. So she politely asked the priest to show her the place where God did not exist, that she might repose in that direction,

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196 Kamil V. Zvelebil, *The Smile*, p. 231

197 *Śivavākkiyar Pātalkaḷ*, Verse No. 358, p. 60

198 *Ibid*, Verse No. 165 and 195, pp. 33, 37

199 *Ibid*, Verse No. 492, p. 80
Cittar enṛum Siṛiyar enṛum aṛiyoṇātha Cīvarkāḷ!,/ Cittar Iṅku irunthapōthu pittar enṛu eṇṇuvīr!
Cittar Iṅku irunthum eṉṉa pittan nāṭṭirupārō?,/ Atthan nādum Inthanādum avarkaḷūk kelāmonṛē.

200 *Śivavākkiyar Pātalkaḷ*, Verse No. 512, p. 82
Śivāyavasi ennavum chchebikka achchagamelam; Śivāyavasi ennavum chchebikka vānum siddhiyam
Śivāyavasi ennavum chchebikka vānam ālalām; Śivāyavasi enbade irutalai thī yāme.

turn her limbs to her convenience. Siddha Avvaiyār is deemed to be a contemporary of Saint Sundarar (c.710 C.E.) and his royal friend-cum-devotee Cēramāṉ Perumāḷ Nāyaṇār. According to a legend, when she sat for meditation upon her favorite deity Viṉāyaka, she learnt through intuition that Sundarar, mounted on a white elephant and Cēramāṉ on a white horse were sojourning to Kailāś, the abode of Śiva. She also had a liking to reach the holy abode and hence hurried her prayer. Thus Viṉāyaka lifted her up with his trunk and placed her in the holy spot, just before the arrival of Sundarar and Cēramāṉ. A poem has also been in vogue, narrating briefly this incident. Here both the elephant and horse may be symbolically denoting the *yōga-sādhana* of the Siddhas to reach the Absolute[201].

According to Tamiḻ tradition, since Kapilar, Avvai and Tiruvaḷḷuvar, as also Adigamān-the chieftain of Tagadūr, otherwise known as Dharmapuri, all had the same Ādi- Bhagavan as parents. Tamiḻ literature also bears witness to the generous gift of the rare "black *āmlā* (*Embelic myrobalam*)" fruit made to Avvai by the Chieftain Adigamān Nedumān Añji of Tagadūr; this fruit was supposed to bestow total rejuvenation[202]. Many scholars believe that there are many persons lived in the same name and the Avvai of the *Saṅgam* period may have been a different person. According to another popular tradition she had enjoyed the Grace other *iṣṭa devatā*, the Elephant-headed God, Gaṇēśa, and blessed by Him, to remain "an old maid forever"- Avvai; so she stayed unmarried.

It is believed that Siddha Avvaiyār had composed the four ethical works viz., *Ātti Sūdi*, *Koṉṟai Vēndaṉ*[203], *Vākkuṇḍām* alias *Mūdurai* and *Nalvaḻi* at an early period. Interestingly, all these four texts start with the invocatory songs to Viṉāyaka. Her devotion to Viṉāyaka enabled her to attain *yōgi*c experience and sing *Viṉāyakar Akaval* and *Avvai Kuṟaḷ*[204] during more mature period. The Śaivites recite the poem

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[201] S.N. Kandasamy, *Op.cit.*, pp. 133-134

[202] S.A. Sarma, *Op.cit.*, p.87-88

[203] *Koṉṟai Vēndaṉ* provides a clue in fixing the historical period of Avvaiyār Siddha. The opening verse of this ethical text is quoted by Ilampūraṇar, the commentator of *Tolkāppiyam*. He lived in the 11th century C.E. Therefore, *Koṉṟai Vēndaṉ* should have been written before 11th century C.E. But S.N. Kandasamy dated her to the 8th century. See S.N. Kandasamy, *Op.cit.*, p. 135

[204] *Avvai Kuṟaḷ* is a unique text on *Yōga* and *jñāna* and included in the works of Tamiḻ Siddhas. Like *Tirukkuṟaḷ*, it was divided into three broad divisions viz., *Vīṭṭūneṟi Pāl*, *Tiruvaruṭpāl* and *Taṇpāl.* In total, it consists of 310 couplets, divided into 31 chapters and three sections. See *Ibid*, p. 134

with ardent piety in their daily worship. They believe that the poem possesses *māntric* potency, bringing to the devotee the benign grace of Viṉāyaka. *Periya Jñāna Kōrvai* includes in its anthology what is generally known as *Avvai Kuṛaḷ*. This work in about forty distich verses expounds the most recondite teachings on higher alchemy or the transformation of man; that Avvai was an initiate to occult teachings becomes evident from this work. Besides, a distinguishing characteristic feature of a Siddha is that true siddhas did not sing in praise of local deities. This assertion apparently contradicts the example provided by the *Viṉāyakar Akaval* of Siddha Avvaiyār until one looks more deeply into the esoteric significance of the poem. So the Siddhas like Avvaiyār encouraged the worship of Viṉāyaka or Gaṇēśa.

In the Hindu pantheon, Viṉāyaka is accorded a venerable position and it is customary with the Hindus to commence any work only after paying homage to Lord Viṉāyaka. The names and epithets of Viṉāyakā are very many. He is popularly known as Piḷḷaiyār, the son of Śiva. He is called Gaṇapati or Gaṇēśa, since he is the chief of the *bhūta-gaṇa* of Śiva. His epithet Vignēśvara denotes that He is the dispeller of impediments and obstacles. Normally he is adored as a celibate. Sometimes, Siddhi and Buddhi are said to be His consorts. Actually *Siddhi* stands for attainments, while *Buddhi* for intellect. Thus, *Siddhi* and *Buddhi* are personified to be His spouses. In the *Āgamic* scriptures, His manifestations are reckoned to be thirty two. Each of them is depicted with a particular form and name. Some of the names of these divine incarnations are Bāla Gaṇapati, Śakti Gaṇapati, Siddhi Gaṇapati, Vigna Gaṇapati, Mahā Gaṇapati, etc.[205].

Significance of the *Viṉāyakar Akaval*

Viṉāyakar Akaval is both the spiritual autobiography of Avvaiyār and her mystical experience of *samādhi* as well, which are pleasantly projects the delightful and divine personality of Viṉāyaka. According to the Siddhas, Viṉāyaka is regarded to be the the Lord of the *mūlādhāra*, where He resides. Siddha Bhadragiri longed for the day when he could surrender himself at the lotus feet of Ganapati, residing at the

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[205] S.N. Kandaswamy, *Op.cit*, pp. 161-162; for more descriptions see T.A. Gopinatha Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, 2 vols.

end of the *mūlādhāra*[206]. Through self-surrender one wins the grace and the blessings of Viṉāyaka necessary for the *sādhaka* to evoke the primordial energy of this *cakra*, known as *kuṇḍalini-śakti*, which then passes through the six-fold *ādhāras*, and finally uniting with the thousand-petalled lotus. Then, an *amrta* or ambrosial nectar which gives one the immortality is secreted at the back of the throat[207].

Viṉāyakar Akaval from the phenomenal or external point of view may be considered as a religious poem. It is also considered as a *sthōtra* and an *sāstra*. From the esoteric or noumenal angle, it is a work of *Kuṇḍalini yōga* and its techniques and wisdom, in which Viṉāyaka represents the personification of the *Praṇava*, the sound of *Aum*, and the Supreme *Guru* who taught her *Kuṇḍalini yōga*. The very fact that this poem *Viṉāyakar Akaval* is not singing the praise of any local deity in any particular shrine, exhibits the characteristic feature of a Siddha as one who does not worship any local deity in a particular temple shrine, but worshipping Him as the esoteric *kuṇḍalini* energy. The entire poem is a symbolic rendering of the esoteric path of *Kuṇḍalini yōga*, leading to *jñāna*[208]. The poem runs to 72 metrical lines, describing the personified cosmic force of *Praṇava* of *Aum* and relating her rare mystical experiences as a practitioner of *Kuṇḍalini Yōga*.

Paṭṭiṇattār

Paṭṭiṇattār was a celebrated philosopher, who lived at Kāveripūmpaṭṭiṇam in 10th century C.E. He belonged to the Cheṭṭy caste, and his real name is said to have been Veṅkata Cheṭṭy. He was possessed of great wealth, which he acquired by trading with Ceylon and the neighbouring islands. One day hearing that some of his ships which had been missing for a time returned to the port laden with gold dust, he went to see them, and during his absence, a Śaiva mendicant called at his house, and asked alms of his wife; but she refused, saying that she could not give any when her husband was not at home. The Śaiva mendicant thereupon went away, leaving with her a slip (palm leaf) in a rag, and requesting her to deliver it to her husband on his return. When Paṭṭiṇattār returned to his house, he looks into slip and finding the words

[206] *Ādhāra Mūlathadiyil Gaṇapathiyai Pādhāra vindham paṇithu nirpatu ekkālam*? *Patiragiri Pātalkal*, *Meyjñāna Pulampal*, verse 66, p.186

[207] S.N. Kandaswamy, *Op.cit*, p. 189

[208] *Ibid*, pp. ix-x

‘*kādhaṛṛa ūssiyum vārāthu kāṇuṅg kadai vaḻikkē*’ which means “Mind that even a needle with a broken eye will not follow thee in thy last day”. He at once imbibed an aversion of the worldly life, gave away all his wealth to the people around, and abandoning his house, became a naked ascetic, and passed the remainder of his days, subsisting wholly on alms, and esteeming a potsherd and pure gold alike. He had a sister, who, ashamed of his conduct, attempted to poison him, but without success. He latterly took up his abode in a wood at Tiruvoṛṛiyūr, where he caused the cowherds, who resorted to the wood to pasture their cattle, to bury him by day up to the shoulders, leaving only his neck and head above the ground, and take him up at night fall; but one day having been inadvertently allowed to remain buried during the night, he was found dead the next morning. He appears to have been likewise a poet, as we have a collection of poems which he composed in praise of the different Śaiva shrines he had visited, besides a number of elegiac verses which he ejaculated extempore at the cremation of his mother’s corpse[209].

Kamil V. Zvelebil suggests the probability of “at least two poets are bearing this name” known to Tamiḻ literature, and in support, refers to *Tirumuṛai*, 11th book of the Śaiva canon. Students of Tamiḻ literature and history will find this calling for clarification, not only to establish the identity of Paṭṭiṇattār, but also to clarify the context in terms of Tamiḻ literature and history. His compositions are included in the collection known as *Peria Jñāna Kōrvai*, and who is said to have lived sometime in 10th century C.E[210].

The term *Paṭṭiṇam* refers to both Kāveripaṭṭiṇam and Chennai (Madras), and *Paṭṭiṇattār* means ‘Townsman’. It is proved that all his gods and the temples he had visited lie within reach of Madras and around, and his last days and his final disappearance or *Samādhi* happened in Tiruvoṭṭriyūr, as noted earlier, an outer suburb of Madras on the seashore[211].

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[209] Simon Casie Chitty, *Op.cit.*, p. 78

[210] In Paṭṭiṇattār’s poems, we find the Telugu plural suffix-‘*lu’* and some other indications which seem to point out that the poet belonged to the Vijayanagara period. see Kamil V. Zvelebil, *The Smile*, p. 221(notes)

[211] S.A. Sarma, *Op.cit.*, p.71

Nowhere in his work, the latter Paṭṭiṇattār speak of *Śakti* or in his numerous visits to various religious shrines around Madras, does he sing the praises of *Śakti*, the Mother goddess, as is the noted custom of all Tamil̠ Siddhars. Furthermore, his philosophy is one of ascetic denial of life here and thirsting for the "quiet" of the Absolute of the *Advaita* tradition, contrary to the holistic philosophy of the Siddhas and their concern for the welfare of all humanity. Paṭṭiṇattār displays all the zeal, vehemence and intensity in feelings and his convictions that are normal in the case of conversions from rank sinning to rare spirituality. One cannot deny that he was in his earlier lifestyle, prior to his renouncing the pleasure of mundane life, given to libertinism, freely indulging his sensuous pleasures; his subsequent adoption of the life of a renunciate and of the way of the dedicated Śaivite may be read as compensating factors in his self-criticism and repentance.

According to oral tradition Paṭṭiṇattār belonged to the wealthy Cheṭṭiār clan and invested his riches in foreign (shipping) trade and was prosperous; he was also, as is the custom those days, well read in the Tamil̠ ways and literature and language, as amply evidenced in his poems. But both his wife and himself were not happy, lacking a son who could carry the name of the family. They thus prayed to Śiva for the grace of a son. The story then goes that one day Śiva Himself in the guise of a babe was seen left on the steps of his house, whom the loving wife took care of and adopted as their own child. Subsequently, when the child turned sixteen, the story has it that he handed a torn piece of silk to his mother, with a broken sewing needle stuck to it, and without a word further, left, never to be seen again. The message was clear[212].

When Paṭṭiṇattār or Tiruveṅkāḍar, arrived at home, her wife handed him this parting gift from the son. When he saw this, the meaning of the massage struck his heart straightway; he sensed at once that the son was none else than God Śiva Himself come to redeem him from his unholy ways. He then renounced all his connection with his family, his wealth or his business that was flouriṣing, and went out to live the life of a mendicant-ascetic, ardently seeking the Grace of Śiva and awaiting his final redemption. In his poems, he expresses this fact thus:

> *"All these ill-begotten riches and the hidden treasures availeth not!*
> *Even an eyeless needle will not follow thee in thy last days".*

[212] S.A. Sarma, *Op.cit.*, p.72

Oral tradition further records that Tiruveṅgāḍar even after renouncing, stayed on around his familiar surroundings where he lived with his mother and family, claiming that until the death of his mother, he would stay around to fulfill his duty her; *Kudi Irunda vīttil kolli vaippēn* which means I shall stay until I set fire to the house I dwelt in (meaning his mother). That he loved his mother beyond words is borne by the spontaneous outpourings of "lamentations" on the passing way of his mother:

> *"When shall I behold her again, who delivered me after all the anguish and labour of ten months, and who, on hearing the birth of a son, so lovingly took me in her arms and fed me with her milk from those richly adorned breasts others? O, How shall I set fire to burn my mother who prayed so to Śiva day and night and carrying me for three-hundred days, delivered me to this world? O, How shall I do this final rite of pouring rice in her mouth, the mouth that uttered those sweet words of "honey," "my nectar" and "my richest Prince," instead of delighting her by revering her with gifts and presents ceremonially placed? O, to behold the hand of my mother so being reduced to ashes, the selfsame hand that so protected me as a child from even the shadow of sparrow in flight? She was there seated! She was seen in the street! She was yesterday! But today she was burnt and reduced to ashes! For the final rite of pouring milk, O Ye, do be present! Hesitate not! It is all the Will of the Most High!"*

Oral tradition further records the incident when Paṭṭiṇattār was resting near the eastern gate of the temple at Tiruvidaimarudūr; he met Badragiriyār who was staying at the western gate of the same temple. When he was asked about the "whereabouts of *Kudumbi*" (a family man), Paṭṭiṇattār pointed to the western gate, where Badragiriyār was then resting, with his dog and a few other necessities, which Paṭṭiṇattār pointed out as "his family." On hearing this, Badragiriyār at once took the hint, wounded up his belongings and departed in true style of a seeker![213]. Much of his poetry concerns the folly of man and guides him in a moving language to have complete control over the senses and direct his inner life Godward. He very much regrets having wasted his early life without understanding the abode of the Supreme.

"You were within me and out of myself
I Searched for you here and there and everywhere".

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[213] *Peria Jñāna Kōrvai* includes Badragiriyār's compositions in its collection of Siddha's songs. If the grammarian Bhartṛhari is thus to be identified as the Badragiriyār, then, Paṭṭiṇattār's date may be placed around the early 7th century C.E, the date the grammarian is said to have lived and died. For the purpose of this study of Tamil Siddhars, Paṭṭiṇattār may be regarded only as ascetic of the *Vēdāntic Jñānamārga* type with its "other-worldly" concerns for redemption and *vairāgya* for all worldly concerns, and as an ardent devotee of Śiva, and thus falling outside the "clan" of Siddhas proper. See S.A. Sarma, *Op.cit.*, pp.73-74

Paṭṭiṇattār chooses to take people Godward by telling them to the vanity and egoism of men and the ungodly and tempting nature of women. He finds woman a bag, her breasts two hanging dried up pouches and so on. The human body remaining distanced from godhead is a cow-shed of lust, stinking, home of falsehood, a treasury of insolence, and so forth.

Paṭṭiṇattār was one of the prominent *bhaktas* and Siddhas was a native of *Paṭṭiṇam*, literally meaning a coastal city. In those days, the name denoted Kāviri Pūmpaṭṭiṇam, the harbour and capital of the Cōḻā monarchs. His original name was Tiruveṅkāḍar. It is the name of Śiva enshrined in Tiruveṅkāḍu, a suburb of Kāviri Pūmpaṭṭiṇam. Being a merchant prince he amassed wealth through trade and led an affluent life. On the dawn of wisdom, he gave up all his wealth in charity and renounced the worldly life. He became a devotee of Śiva and also a great Siddha. He was also a great poet and mystic[214].

With regard to Paṭṭiṇattār, a contemporary of Cēndanār, scholars differ in the identity of the Siddha Paṭṭiṇattār with the hymnist Paṭṭiṇattar. The latter's five works on the shrines at Chidambaram, Sīrkāḻi, Tiruviḍaimarudūr, Kañci and Tiruvoṟṟiyūr are included in the anthology of the 11th *Tirumuṟai* of the Śaivites. He lived in the 10th century C.E. Another collection of poems of Paṭṭiṇattār goes by the name *Paṭṭiṇattār Pāḍal Tirattu*. This collection is included in the compilation of the poems of the Siddhas by some editors and hence treated to be the creation of Siddhar Paṭṭiṇattār. However, some scholars considered that this collection is the composition of a separate Paṭṭiṇattār, who lived after the Tirumūlar poet of the same name, already mentioned. Apart from these two, a third Paṭṭiṇattār, approved to be a real Siddha composed many poems with full of ethical, mystical and metaphysical thoughts which are collected under the title *Paṭṭiṇattār Jñānam*, admitted in the anthology of the Siddha poems. Nevertheless, the second and third Paṭṭiṇattār seem to be the same person on the basis of linguistic, grammatical and prosodial commonness found in their poems[215].

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214 S.N. Kandaswamy, *Op.cit*, p.56

215 *Ibid*., p.20

Paṭṭiṇattār was a monotheist; but he identified the only one God with Śaiva, and also maintained the doctrine of metempsychosis, teaching that emancipation from future birth, and absorption into the Divine essence was the supreme bliss. He at the same time denied that man was a free-agent[216]. It may be seen by the following stanzas.

> *O my heart! Do not be desponding. If thou will meditate on the five letters and devoutly worship Śaṅkara (Śiva), who dwells at Tillai; who fills the earth with his wisdom, who destroyed the (rebellious) cities; who is the lamp which is never extinguished; and who dances at the Sacred Court, surely thou shalt obtain liberation from future birth and be absorbed into his divine essence*[217].
>
> *Oh Ekamba (Śiva) of Kachchi! Can I, an ignorant dog, know how many fathers, or how many mothers, or how many wives, of how many children I have had in the course of my former transmigrations, and how many more I shall have in my future?* [218]
>
> *Oh Ekamba of Kachchi? Will the puppet which is moved by a string, move by itself after the string shall have been broken? Am I not moved by thee in like manner? Therefore can I do anything by myself, if I am separated from thee?* [219]

There were, most probably, at least two poets bearing this name[220] (which means 'The one who belongs to the City', that is, the City of Pukār or Kāverippaṭṭiṇam in Tamil̲ literary history. Though he is not counted among the sixty-three canonized Śaivite saints -were included into the eleventh book of the Śaivite canon (*Tirumuṛai*). Another, who must be regarded as the greatest poet among the Siddhas. Though there are some common features of the two, the differences are more striking, both in the content and the form of their poetry. While Paṭṭiṇattār the Siddha adopts frequently common colloquial speech forms, and his prosody is simple and forceful, often the echo of folksongs, the earlier Paṭṭiṇattār (probably 10th Century)

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[216] Simon Casie Chitty, *Op.cit*., p. 78

[217] *Paṭṭiṇattār Pātalkaḷ*, Verse 60. English Translation by Simon Casie Chitty, *Op.cit*, p. 79

[218] *Ibid*, Verse 43. English Translation by Simon Casie Chitty, *Op.cit*, p. 79

[219] *Ibid*, Verse 4. English Translation by Simon Casie Chitty, *Op.cit*, p. 79

[220] There were more than one Paṭṭiṇattār in Tamil Literary tradition. Paṭṭiṇattār I (c. 10th century) was but a Śaiva hymnist whose hymns are included in the 11th *Tirumuṛai*, had nothing to do with the Siddha tradition. Numbers of Siddha poems of different qualities are attributed to one Paṭṭiṇattār, and are included in the *Jñānakkōvai*, M. Arunachalam feels that the author of the first six poems in the *Ñānakkōvai* may belong to the 14th century and the author of the rest, whom he calls Paṭṭiṇattār, may belong to a still later period. A number of legends have gathered around the name of Paṭṭiṇattār, and we have three collections of them, treating him as a Siddha. See also M.Arunachalam, *Tamil Ilakkiya Varalāṛu-14th century*, pp. 370-2, 381-383.

uses only literary Tamil̲, and his poetry is of high style with unmistakable Siddhar spirit[221].

While, in the case of the later poet (most probably 14th-15th Century), one can find the characteristic features of an *Yōgic* ascetic, a man of revolt against Brahmanic and ritualistic social order, and a saint singing of the sadness in the world and accepting it with a kind of cheerful resignation. The earlier Paṭṭiṇattār, worshipping in many temples, shows definite affinity with the *bhakti* (devotional) schools of poetry. While the merit of our Paṭṭiṇattār's poems lies chiefly in their straight- forward forcefulness and sincerity, the poems of the earlier poet abound in charming descriptions and captivating images. In short, the five long pieces which found their way into the holy Śaivite writings are creations of a different hand than the one which composed the haunting Siddha songs.

In most of his poems, Paṭṭiṇattār the Siddha is the great relativist and the great pessimist of Tamil̲ literature. Life is a tragedy an eternal interplay of contradictions, a lie, 'a tale told by an idiot'. Man is the seat of vileness and egoism, woman the great temptress. Her beauty is the most detestable thing on earth. The female body is a bag of filth. The belly compared by poets to a banyan leaf, is a shaking bag of dirt and dregs; the breasts, compared to lotus-buds, are in fact two hanging dried-up pouches parched by inner heat and scratched by the finger-nails of lusty men. The neck is full of sweat and dust and filth, and out of her hellish mouth spurts forth poison. But Paṭṭiṇattār's negative attitude towards the body is more that of a 'classical' *Yōgin* than that of a Siddha. While the early Tamil̲ cittar are full of confidence and self-respect, Paṭṭiṇattār manifests spiritual frustration and passionate longing for peace, even in death. Some of his 'beggary' stanzas have a charm of their own which has hardly been matched by any other piece of Tamil̲ poetry[222]. For many times, his poems show an evident antipathy to all women; and most of his songs show that they are the outcome of his frustrating experiences towards the worldly life. But the usual *yōgic* practices and their mystical experiences of the Tamil̲ Siddhas are found less in the songs of Paṭṭiṇattār.

[221] K.A.N. Sastry, *Op.cit*., pp. 95-96.

[222] Kamil V. Zvelebil, *The Smile of Murugan*, pp. 234-235

Pattirakiri (Bhadragiri)

Pattirakiri[223] is one of the Tami<u>l</u> Siddhas, who was converted to Siddhism by Paṭṭiṇattār. He was a contemporary of Paṭṭiṇattār, but his real name is unknown. The word *bhadra* means beauty, grace, goodness, caution, safety and also an elephant. *Giri* means mountain. Hence the whole name connotes the sense of a determined and strong person with all spiritual values[224]. According to the legend, he was a king of Ujjain (*Ujjaini Māhakālam*). When Paṭṭiṇattār was absorbed in deep meditation in a shrine of Gaṇēśa, some thieves arrived and robbed the valuable ornaments of the king, then flung one of them to the God as an offering. But, it fell around the neck of Paṭṭiṇattār. When the government servants saw the royal ornament with the saint, he was caught as if he was a thief and was ordered to be fixed on the impaling stake. Then the innocent Paṭṭiṇattār recited a poem which indicated that all of this had happened as by the will of the divine, the stake caught fire and was burnt. Knowing his folly, the king fell at Paṭṭiṇattār's feet and accepted him as his preceptor. Subsequently he renounced his kingdom all his royal life and became an ascetic, accepting Paṭṭiṇattār as his spiritual *Guru*. Like Paṭṭiṇattār, Bhadragiri also abandoned all his worldly possession and became a naked *Sanniyāsi*. He begged for his bread from the villagers, enduring the privation of everything that could in any way have served to gratify his senses[225].

Both Paṭṭiṇattār and Bhadragiri spent much time in Tiruvidaimarudūr practicing *Śivayōga*. As a saint poet and a Siddha, he shows many features common with Śivavākkiyar. He composed 237 disticHes which go under the name Lamentations (Craving) for True Knowledge, '*Meyñāna Pulampal*'. The tone of the poem is one of high pitched wailing is in the form of a couplet, filled with the sense of detachment, moral flavor and spiritual fervor[226]. M.Arunachalam assigns him to the 14th century on the basis of a reference to him by Kaṇṇuḍaiya Vaḷḷalār (C.E. 1425)[227].

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[223] The name Patirakiri is probably a corruption of the Sanskrit name Bhartruhari. The Tamil poems may be said to belong to the Siddha School. He is said to be a disciple of Paṭṭiṇattār. It is must to distinguish between Paṭṭiṇattār, one of the authors of the works in eleventh *Śaiva Tirumuṛai*, which probably belong to the tenth century and the other, the author of the popular poems which cannot be earlier than the fifteenth century and which may be looked upon as works of the Siddha School. See Simon Casie Chitty, *Op.cit*, p. 78

[224] S. N. Kandaswamy, *Op.cit.*, p.55

[225] Simon Casie Chitty, *Op.cit*, p. 77

[226] S. N. Kandaswamy, *Op.cit.*, p.55

[227] M. Arunachalam, *Op.cit*., p. 389.

His short stanzas are indeed pathetic and somewhat tiresome lamentations showing utter frustration, disgust, a longing for peace, deliverance, for the sleep of death. All end with the refrain *ekkālam* 'when'- which means, when will come the time of his redemption? Like all other popular Tamiḻ Siddhas, Bhadragiri also dealt with *ida-piṅkala*, *suśumna*[228], *mūlādhāra*, drinking of nectar of immortality, *sat-cakras*, *pēroli*[229]; *aṣtāṅga-yōga*, transmigration; *veṭṭaveli*, Sadāśiva[230], etc.

Aruṇagiri Nāthar

Aruṇagiri Nāthar was an eminent poet, who from his entire devotedness to the worship of Śiva, renounced the world and assuming the life of an ascetic, lived and died at the Śiva fane at Tiruvaṇṇāmalai in Tamiḻnādu. He belonged to the family of *Dindima* which received the patronage of the Vijayanagara rulers in later times. Aruṇagiri spent the major part of his life at Tiruvaṇṇāmalai. The hill was Aruṇagiri means the red hill. Obliviously the Siddha Aruṇagirinātha was named after this sacred hill[231]. His compositions are of a religious character and in praise of Skanda. They are as follows: *Kandan Alaṅgāram, Kandan Aṇubhūdi, Kandan Antādi, Tiruvaguppu* and *Tiruppugaḻ*. This last work containing a series of 100 stanzas, being enriched by a splendid and harmonious flow of diction has gained great popularity amongst the Śaivas, who generally have it recited, when any member of their sect is at the point of death. Aruṇagiri Nāthar was also the author of a short harmonic poem, entitled *Udaṛkūṟṟu Vaṇṇam*, descriptive of the different stages of human life[232].

This Tamiḻ saint-poet and a Siddha belong to 14th century[233]. He was a staunch devotee of Lord Muruga. He was an exponent of Sanskrit and Tamiḻ. He had also acquired mastery over various subjects like *Vēdas*, *Upaniṣads*, *Itihāsas*, *Purāṇas*, *Bhagavadgīta*, *Āgama*, *Mantra* and *tantra sāstras*, *yōga* etc. which has surely reflected in his works. He was leading a lavish life in his youth, later became an

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[228] *Patirakiri Pātalkal*, Verse 94, in Kōvēndhan, *Op.cit*, p. 188

[229] *Ibid.*, Verses 95, 104, in Kōvēndhan, *Op.cit*, p. 189

[230] *Ibid.*,Verses 148, 173, 198, in Kōvēndhan, *Op.cit*, pp. 192, 194 and 196 respectively

[231] R. Nagasamy, *Tantric Cult of South India*, pp. 64-65

[232] Simon Casie Chitty, *Op.cit*, pp. 14-15

[233] Based on some epigraphical sources dated *saka* 1262 (1340 C.E.), R. Nagasamy gives a detailed account on date of the Aruṇagirinātha, his contemporaries, his conflict with one Sambandāndān, and also dated that Aruṇagiri might have born in 1300 C.E. for details see R. Nagasamy, *Tantric Cult of South India*, p. 65

ascetic and became a devotee of Lord Muruga. He then started worshipping Lord Śaṇmukha and devoting all his time in chanting his sacred name for a long time. At last, he wanted to surrender his life at the feet of Lord Subramaṇyā by way of suicide. With the intention of ending his life he jumped from the tall *gōpura* of the temple of Śri Aruṇāchalēśvara, popularly called as Aṇṇāmalai in Tamiḻ. Then Lord Muruga appeared and rescued him. Then he travelled widely throughout South India, North India and Śri Laṅka visiting all most all Murugaṉ shrines. He sang as many as 16,000 songs in praise of the Lord Muruga. He visited as many as 226 Murugaṉ temples and sang *Tiruppugaḻ*. He composed the famous *Tiruppugaḻ*, consisting of over 1360 songs in various meters handled with utmost skill and characterized by a charming lilt. The diction is highly Sanskritised and the imagery vivid. The author's intimate knowledge of the sacred lore of Hinduism is evident in every song. His mention of Praudhadēva Rāya places him in the 15^{th} century[234]. His songs betray evidence of a youthful life of libertinism followed by remorse. As he accepted Muruga or Kārtikēya as the supreme deity, he followed the philosophy of *Śaiva Siddhānta* system. He seems to have visited all the shrines of Muruga and been particularly attached to Paḻaṉi which figures largely in the *Tiruppugaḻ*. He was perhaps also author of shorter devotional poems, all in praise of Muruga[235]. The *Tiruppugaḻ* of Aruṇagiri and other Siddhar compositions came to be accommodated in orthodox Carnatic concerts[236].

An abridged translation of it in English by the Rev. Mr. Robert in his *Oriental Illustration of the Sacred Scriptures* is as follows:

> *"The beginning of man is as a dew-drop falling from the tip of a blade of grass; he assumes his corporeal form in the womb of his mother, in the course of ten months and is then brought forth; he lies down, crawls, prattles, walks, and becomes acquainted with science. At sixteen he is in the bloom of youth; goes forth richly dressed, and adorned with jewels, courts the society of young women, is ravished by their eyes, lets himself loose to all irregularities and squanders his wealth. His youth now passes away and old age creeps on; his hair turns grey, his teeth drop, his eyes grow dim, his organs of hearing are impaired, his body becomes dry, his back bends, and he is troubled with incessant cough, which disturbs his sleep. He is no longer able to walk, and has recourse to a cane, and is gazed at by the young with derision. While in this condition, the ministers of Yama, with their shaggy*

234 K.A.N. Sastry, *Op.cit*, p. 135. He also refers about one Sōmanāthadēva *matha*. But not much information is available about that. For details see R. Nagasamy, *Tantric Cult of South India*, p. 65

235 K.A.N. Sastry, *Op.cit*, p. 135.

236 N. Subrahmanian, *The Tamils:*, Madras, 1996, p. 182

hair and frightful countenance, approach him, and seize and bear away his life amidst the screams of his wife and children. His kinsfolk and friends then assembled, talk of his good or evil deeds, convey his body to the burning ground with the sound of tom-toms, and commit it to the flame which consumes and reduces it to a handful of ashes"[237].

Like Tirumūlanātha, he is also called with the suffix 'nātha' as Aruṇagirinātha, seems to indicate that he belonged to the tradition of the Nātha tradition, as well as he frequently refers about various aspects of *Śakti* in his songs, which tempted to suggest him as the follower of the *Śākta* tradition. Whatever it may be, he made an independent, powerful and devotional movement in praise Skanda with a strong base of *Śākta* tradition. In many of his songs, Aruṇagiri mentioned about various forms of *Śakti* while he praising Skanda as the child of this universal mother[238]. Thus, Aruṇagiri though was a staunch devotee of Lord Muruga; he was celebrated as a great Siddha by all sorts of Hindu traditions. Evidently, even today, more than a shrine dedicated to Lord Muruga, the Tiruppugaḻ of Siddha Aruṇagiri is sung in the centres and shrines dedicated to the Siddhas.

Siddha Bōgar

Bōgar was one of the celebrated Tamiḻ Siddhas whose antiquity and biography has merged into fable. He was well versed in poetry and medicine. Some of his works are *Bōgar yōgamārgam*, *Bōgar Eḻunūru*, *Bōgar Tirumandiram* and *Bōgar Nigaṇdu*. These entire works are dealing with the preparations of several kinds of medicines. Some think doubtfully that he was Fo or Fohi, the person who introduced Buddhism into China in the latter part of the first century C.E[239]. Bōgar is the disciple of Kālaṅgi Nāthar who was one of the pupils of the great Tirumūlar. Tradition says that he was one of those who went overseas and visited a number of places including Rome in search of medicinal herbs. According to a later version, he was a staunch devotee of the Muruga cult. When one of his pupils Karuvūr Dēvar (*Koṅgumaṇdala Satakam* 34) installed a shrine at Tañjāvūr in honour of Śiva, Bōgar is said to have sent a note (*Ōlai*) for the occasion apparently a message of good wishes for the occasion.

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[237] Simon Casie Chitty, *Op.cit.*, p. 16; The Tamil version of this song is now almost sung in all Siddha centres either vocally or in recorded form.

[238] R. Nagasamy, *Tantric Cult of South India*, p. 65

[239] However, many of his works are not included in many editions of the siddha poems. See Simon Casie Chitty, *Op.cit*, p. 90

Legends also connected him with the places like Saduragiri and Śivagiri as their abodes. Saṭṭaimuṉi, Koṅgaṇar, Sundarānandar and Pulippāṇi of Paḻaṉi (Vaikānagar) were his pupils. It is popularly said that he spent his part of his life at Paḻaṉi hills as evinced by the existence of Bōgar *Samādhi*. Bōgar's works were several. The popularly known among them are *Bōgar 7000*, *Bōgar Nighaṇtu* 17000 and. A work on *Yōga* called *Bōgar Yōgam* 700[240].

Koṅkumaṇdala Satakam says that Siddhar Bōgar and Pulippāṇi were lived at Vaigā Nagar which is popularly known as Paḻaṉi is a part of Koṅkumaṇdalam[241]. There is a separate shrine dedicated to Siddha Bōgar near the Paḻaṉiāṇdavar shrine in the hill top. Tirumūlar in his *Tirumantiram* gives us no more detail about this Bōgar than to say that he was a contemporary pontiff of one of the seen *sanmārga mathas*. Though Bōgar himself has left no autobiographical detail, a late tradition makes him the guru of Tirumāḷigai Dēvar and Karuvūr Dēvar, two Śaiva hymnists of c.10th-11th century and weaves many legends around them. However, the hymns of these two alleged disciples do not bear out this tradition.

In contradiction to this, one Sundarānadar says that Bōgar was born at Paraṅgiyūr, studied with Mūlar the *Vāmācāra* Śāktism, for the active practice of which he was often in quest of beautiful damsels". Because of this practice, Bōgar says that he earned this name. Besides teaching the *Vāmācāra* to Koṅgaṇar and Karuvūrār, he ordered them to get him every day beautiful young women for his own *vāmācāra* practices, Bōgar adds, "one day these two disciples brought beautiful stone image of a women and so I angrily cursed them to become crows". According to another tradition, Bōgar of Saduragiri had 557 disciples, and among them only Koṅgaṇar and Karuvūrār seem to have been prominent both inside and outside the Siddha tradition. Besides, he is reputed as the maker of the idol of Daṇḍapāṇi at Paḻaṉi with *navapāśāṇa*[242]. A *cakra*

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[240] V. Ramachandra Dikshitar, *Op.cit.*, pp. 162-167

[241] *Yōga vaithiyañj solrasa vāda melākkalaiyunth Dēga nilaiperuṅ kāyakaṛ paṅkaḷeṇ siddhiyuñjsol Bōga rudan Pulip pāṇi mudaliya puṇyarelā Māga muṛavamar vaigā nagar Koṅku maṇdalamē.* Karmega Kavingar, *Koṅgumaṇdala Satakam*, verse 36, (Tamil), in T.A. Muttusamy Konar, (ed.) Sadhu Press, Chennai, 1923, p.39

[242] There exists a doubt among the scholars that the Daṇḍāyutapāṇi who enshrined on the top of the Paḻaṉi hill is really Murukaṉ or only a Siddha God. Because it is to be noted that the deity on the hill carries a *taṇṭa* (a staff) instead *Vēl* or the spear which is an usual and essential attribute of Lord Murukaṉ. See N. Subrahmanian, *Tamil Social History*, Vol. I, Institute of Asian Studies, Chennai, 1997, p. 364

and an emerald *liṅga*, supposed to have been worshipped by this Siddha are housed in a shrine, which contains his tomb, at Pa<u>l</u>a<u>n</u>i. He claims to have met Kālāṅgi in China, got initiated into Siddhism and visited Mecca and Jerusalem[243].

In the Tami<u>l</u> encyclopedia *Abithāna-chinthāmaṇi*, it is said that he was a Chinese by birth and a Buddhist by faith. From China, he travelled widely and reached India 1500 years ago. He stayed at Pāṭali (Pāṭna) and Gayā, the holy spots of Buddhism for some time. Then he came to South India and lived there for a very long period practising and propagating *Yōga*[244]. He initiated many persons into the discipline of *Yōga* who later became prominent Siddhas. He installed the idol of Pa<u>l</u>a<u>n</u>i Āṇḍavar (Muruga, son of Śiva), made out of *navapāśāṇas* (poisons) being the product of nine secret herbal and chemical ingredients which made the idol harder than the granite stone. In the Tami<u>l</u> tradition Bōgar is held in high esteem for his boundless devotion to Muruga as the principle of *Aumkāra*. He spent his last days in the Hills of Pa<u>l</u>a<u>n</u>i where he entered into eternal absorption and beautitude. Those, who do not subscribe to the view that Bōgar was a Chinese by birth, agree that he visited China many times.

Bōgar is said to have lived during third to fifth centuries C.E., and practiced and taught alchemy. Traditions concerning Bōgar cast him either as a Chinese philosopher who came to India for the study of medicine, traveling first to Patna and Bodhgaya before taking up residence in Madras; or as a south Indian Sittar, who traveled to China and taught alchemy to a ruler named Koṅg (Koṅgaṇar?) before returning to south India[245].

Sometimes Bōgar is also connected with the Buddhist monks such as Bōdhidharma and Paramārtha, being natives of Kāñci carried the message of *Tāntric* Buddhism, an off-shoot of the *Yōgācārā* system to China from there it spread to other parts of Asia including Japan. Even in the period of the later Cō<u>l</u>ās, the commercial and cultural contact between Tami<u>l</u>nādu and China thrived as evidenced from the fact

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[243] R.Venkataman in his work classified Bōgar into Bōgar I, II and III based on the chronology. For more details about the chronology of Bōgar see R.Venkataraman, *Op.cit*., p. 52

[244] S.N. Kandasamy, *Op.cit.*, p.63

[245] David Gordon White, *The Alchemical Body*, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 2004, p.61.

that Rājarāja Cōḻā-I and his son Rājēndra Cōḻā-I patronized the Buddhist pagoda at Nāgapaṭṭiṇam in the eastern coast where the Chinese traders brought their merchandise in exchange for South Indian commodities. So, it becomes evident that Bōgar's contact with China cannot be treated as a myth, but can be construed as a fact. The tradition holds the view that Bōgar practiced *yōga* at Katirgāmam, the sacred spot of Lord Muruga in the southern Śri Laṅka[246].

Some of the tradition says that he came to India in the 3rd century C.E[247]., visited Arabia, and got some of his pupils initiated in Chinese mechanical and alchemical arts by sending them to China. It is said that he himself went to China with them. Tamiḻ works mention Bōgar's name and also that of his disciple Pulippāṇi who came with him and settled in South India. Quite a large number of works were left by the Tamiḻ Sittars but only a few are now in print[248]. Thus, there exists numerous fictions on Bōgar, but none of them are useful to trace his biographical details. Besides, most of them remain mere folk tales without any historical values.

Siddha Pulippāṇi

Pulippāṇi Siddha is said to be the disciple of Siddha Bōgar. As already stated Bōgar and Pulippāṇi, were lived at Vaigā nagar, the other name of Paḻaṉi, and belongs to the part of *Koṅkumaṇdalam*[249]. A separate shrine is dedicated to Siddha Pulippāṇi under the foothills of Paḻaṉi. Interesting thing in the following verse from the *Pulippāṇi Pātal Tiraṭṭu*, the period of these siddhars is mentioned as *kaliyuga* 205.

In the *Pulippāṇi Pātal Tiraṭṭu*, Siddha Pulippāṇi, he himself says that he was the disciple of Bōgar and under him; he learned the arts of eight *siddhis* and other

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246 S.N. Kandasamy, *Op.cit.*, p.64

247 The date of Bōgar is doubtful.

248 As stated by Bhattacharyya, Most of the works are scattered as manuscripts which are to be found in Madras Oriental Manuscript Library, Sarabhoji Maharaja's Library at Tañjāvūr, Āduthurai Matha at Tañjāvūr and at various South Indian Mathas. In 1951, D.V. Subha Reddy published a list of 27 works indicating the nature of their contents, originally published by W. Ainslie in *Madras Medical Journal*, Vol II, No. 2 adding an extra list of 38 Tamil books composed by the Sittars. See N.N. Bhattacharyya, *History of the Tantric Religion*, Manohar, New Delhi, 1999 (2nd ed.), p. 39

249 *Yōga vaithiyañj solrasa vāda me lākkalaiyunth Dēga nilaiperuṅ kāyakaṟ paṅkaḷeṉ siddhiyuñjsol Bōga rudan Pulip pāṇi mudaliya puṇyarelā Māga muṟavamar vaigā nagar Koṅku maṇdalamē. See* Karmega Kavingar, *Koṅgumaṇdala Satakam*, verse 36, (Tamil), in T.A. Muttusamy Konar, (ed.) Sadhu Press, Chennai, 1923, p. 39

miracle powers[250]. The song also says that Bōgar has numerous disciples like Tirumāḷigaidēvar, Karūr Siddhar, Pulippāṇi and others. Of them Tirumāḷigaidēvar embraced the Śaiva religion and Karūrdēvar adopted the *vāmācārā* path of Śaivism. The 34th verse of the *Koṅkumaṇdala Satakam* refers about his presence at Brahadīśvara temple at Tañjāvūr at the time of its *aṣtabhandana*.

Popular tradition says that Pulippāṇi was a Chinese who was initiated by Bōgar in the art of *Siddhayōga*, and he became his ardent disciple. Often he has been identified with Vyāgrapāda, the devotee of Natarāja. It seems that this hypothesis is based partially on the semantics of these words. But it is to be borne in mind that Vyāgrapāda is known in the 11th *Tirumuṛai* as *Pulikkālar*, i.e., the Saint with tiger's feet. Since he used to ride on a tiger (Puli), he was named Pulippāṇi[251]. He was a staunch devotee of Lord Muruga in the abode of Paḻaṉi Hills. Following the guidelines of his master Bōgar, he practised *Yōga* and attained many *siddhis*. The official priests of the Paḻaṉi Āṇdavar shrine at the Paḻaṉi Hills hailed from the lineage of Pulippāṇi Siddhar[252]. However, during the period of Tirumalai Nāyak, the ruler of Madurai region his minister Rāmappa Aiyar changed the tradition by inducting some Brahmin priests from the adjacent Koṅgu Dēsam in the 17th century C.E. However, the descendants of Pulippāṇi Cittar maintain the *samādhi* shrine of Bōgar within the same temple and a *āshram* nearby where their predecessors are buried even in the present day[253].

250 '*Thāṉāṉa Śivagiriyiṛ Thaṇdayudhapāṇi dhādhāvaip pūsithōr Brahman Indiran Thēṉāṉa Bōgarudaṉ ivarkaḷ mūvar teḷivāka muṉyugathil mūvarappā, Kōṉāṉa kaliyugam irunūṟṟainthil koṟṟavaṉē Pulippāṇi pūsithēṉpār Māṉāṉa aṭṭasiddhi kōdasakti maindhanē cittarida nadaṉanthānē', Pulippāṇi Pātal Tiraṭṭu*, cited in T.A. Muttusamy Konar,(ed.), *Koṅgumaṇdala Satakam*, (Tamil), Sadhu Press, Chennai, 1923, p. 40

251 One of the feats of the siddhas was the taming and controlling of the fearful and terrific animals like the lion, tiger, boar and elephant. Hence, Pulippāṇi's mount being a tiger may not be a myth.

252 R. Venkataraman put forth a legend about Pulippāṇi that one Śivaliṅga Uḍaiyār from the Kannada country came to Paḻaṉi, became Bōgar's disciple and acquired *aṣta-siddhis*. Bōgar handed over the duty of the ritual worship of Daṇḍāyudapāṇi to Pulippāṇi and retired to a nearby cave for penance. Once when the *abhishēka patra* broke on the way down hill, Pulippāṇi carried water in his cupped palm, reached the shrine quickly riding on the back of a tiger, and fulfilled the daily ritual. Pleased with his disciple's resourcefulness, Bōgar gave him the title Pulippāṇi Patra Uḍayār. R.Venkataraman, *Op.cit.*, p. 65

253 S.N. Kandasamy, *Op.cit.*, p.26

Siddha Karuvūrār

Siddha Karuvūrār is considered to be one among the eighteen Siddhars who belonged to the late 17th century. His name itself reveals that he hailed from Karuvūr, the modern Karūr district of Tamiḻnādu. His real name is unknown. He was both a *bhakta* and a Siddha. He performed many wonders. He is intimately associated with Siddha Bōgar[254]. He describes Śāktism vividly in his works. Though nothing is known about this Siddha except that he was a disciple of Bōgar of Saduragiri[255] and that he was a *Śākta*. The *Koṅgumaṇḍala Śatakam*, which may belong to 17th century, clubs Siddha Karuvūrār with Karuvūr Dēvar who belongs to c. 10th Century. It says that Karuvūrār, as the great Siddha born in Karuvūr in the *Koṅgumaṇḍalam*; he achieved the *aṣtabhandana* merely by spitting his *tāmbula*[256]; he made a tree shower fish and he wrote the *Tiruviśaippā*. However, there are no proper details available in the above said work regarding the places and circumstances under which these events took place. Later, based on these references, many legends were developed elaborately by an anonymous author of the *Karuvūr Purāṇam*[257].

The chronological problem was further complicated by the writings of other scholars like S. R. Balasubramaniyan connects Karuvūr Dēvar with the Cōḻā King Rājarāja I and says that the former was the spiritual *guru* of Rājarāja I[258]. It is also claimed that Karuvūr Dēvar along with the Cōḻā King Rājarāja has been represented

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254 *Ibid*, p.57

255 This Bōgar belongs to 17th century, he was the *Guru* and a contemporary of Karuvūrār. According to Sundarānandar, this Bōgar was born at Paraṅgiyūr, studied with Mūlar the *Vāmācāra Śāktism*, for the active practice of which he was often in quest of beautiful damsels. It is said, because of this practice Bōgar earned this name. Besides teaching the *Vāmācāra* to Koṅgaṇar and Karuvūrār, he ordered them to get him every day beautiful young women for his own *Vāmācāra* practices. There are several opinions about the periodicity and numbers of Bōgar. For more details see R. Venkatraman, *Op.cit.,* p. 52

256 *Aṣtabandha* consists of eight ingredients to fix the idols firmly at its base. If the ratio of those eight ingredients is differed or not mixed properly, then the idols will not fix correctly. It is said Karuvūrār installed the *liṅga* of the Brahadīsvara temple by merely spiting his *tāmbūla* which consists of betel leaves, arecanut and a slight amount of lime, is meant for chewing. According to R. Venkataraman, the eight ingredients are 1. *Karuṅkuṅgiliyam* (resin of black dammar tree), 2. *Kāvikkal* (red ochre), 3. *Kombarakku* (stick *lac*), 4. *Maisatchi* (Indian *bedellium*), 5. *Sempañju* (Brazil cotton), 6. *Sukkān Kal* (limestone), 7. *Tēn meḷugu* (bee's wax) and 8. *Veḷḷaikkuṅgiliyam* (resin of Piney varnish tree). see R. Venkatraman, *op.cit*, Appendix 13, p. 229.

257 R. Venkataraman, *op.cit*, pp. 56-57.

258 But no epigraphical records or contemporary literary sources attest this fact. S. R. Balasubrahmanyam, *op.cit*, p. 31,34; see also R. Champakalakshmi, *Tradition, Dissent and Ideology: Essays in Honour of Romila Thapar*, OUP, New Delhi, 1996, p. 147

in stone and in murals found inside the sanctum walls of the Tañjāvūr temple[259], and also says that he was that Karuvūr Dēvar who had sung eleven verses on the glory of the Lord of Rājarājēśvaram in his *Tiruviśaippā*[260], a poetical composition. In Tañjāvūr, Karuvūr Dēvar is depicted like a rich person with more ornaments and royal look. But in the murals found inside fourth tire of the *Gōpura* of Tirupudaimarudur temple (near Ambāsamudram of Tirunelveli District) which probably belong to 17th century, depicting a scene of Karuvūr Dēvar near a Gaṇēśa shrine and crossing a river and showing his hands like stopping the women who follows him. This mural contains the captions in it and in the above said scene the name is written as Karuvūr Dēvar. He is wearing long *rudrākṣamālās* in his neck and also in his head which rounded in his hair dress. A red turban was tied in his head. He smeared holy ashes in his body. He is wearing only a *dhoti* from his waist to knee and holding a staff in his hand[261].

The continuity of the Siddha tradition is visible in its best form again in the same Brahadīsvara temple. A small shrine with the sculpture of Karuvūrār consecrated on the backside of the Sanctum of the Brahadīśvara temple[262] is now one of the most popular spots of worship. Because, this name not only refers to the Karuvūr Dēvar (c.11th-12th century), a poet of the Śaiva Bhakti School, but also denotes a Karuvūr Siddha (c.17th century C.E.), a member of *Kāyasiddha* School[263]. So there is a probability to think that both Karuvūr Dēvar and Karuvūr Siddha are

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[259] B. Venkataraman, *Rājarājēśvaram: The Pinacle of Cōḻā Art*, Mudgala Trust, Madras, 1985, p. 231; for sculptural representation in stone see p. 162, Fig. 25B and for mural representation see Fig. 11B. In p.119, he gave the list of mural paintings with chamber numbers and the paintings of Rājarāja I and Karuvūr Dēvar according to this author is in Chamber No.10, inner jamb facing north.

[260] A. V. Subramania Aiyar states that "There is a Śaivite tradition that Tirumāḷigai Dēvar and Karuvūr Dēvar, whose poems are found in the ninth *Tirumuṛai* were *Siddhars*. It is said that the later performed a miracle during the installation ceremony of the big temple at Tañjāvūr. But there is no indication in their poems that they have the outlook of the Siddhars". See A. V. Subramania Aiyar, *The Poetry and the Philosophy of the Tamil Siddhars: An Essay in Criticism*, S. Mahadevan Publisher, Tirunelveli, 1957, p. 7 (FN). Similarly, in contradiction to the above statement there found thirty verses called *Karuvūrār Pūjā Vithi* in the collection of Siddha songs as written by Karuvūrār. These thirty songs dealt with *yōga*, *pūjā* and *śakti* worship and no references found on Tañjāvūr or on its related. Kōvēndhan, *Op.cit.*, pp. 338-345.

[261] Kudavayil Balasubramaniam, *op.cit*, p. 42

[262] Karuvūr Dēvar shrine is the last addition inside the courtyard is a small shrine built at the beginning of the 20th century to honour Karuvūr Dēvar who wrote *Tiruviśaippā*, the sacred hymns to praise the Lord of Rājarājēsvaram during the Cōḻā period. See Kudavāyil Balasubramaniam, *op.cit*, p. 38

[263] Tamiḻ Siddhas are classified into three viz. *Ñānasiddhas*, *Kāyasiddhas* and *Sanmārgasiddhas*. And Karuvūrār belongs to the second group. R. Venkatraman, *op.cit*, pp. passim.

different persons and the former is the *Bhakti* poet, who has sung eleven poems on this temple and they are included in the *Tiruviśppā*; and the latter one is the Siddha who composed thirty songs on *yōga* and *Pūjāvithi*. However, this statue was installed only half a century ago[264]. Similarly, the confusion also caused regarding the period and caste of Karuvūrār. The *Sthalapuranas* began to club Karuvūr Dēvar (11th century), a hymnist with Karuvūr Siddhar (16th century), a member of the Siddha cult, and this create many new legends[265]. Regarding his caste, the list of eighteen Siddhas with their (imaginary) pictures displayed in Sarasvathi Mahāl of Tañjāvūr[266] mention that Karuvūrār belongs to the *Kudimagan* or *Panikar* caste. But, some Tamiḻ works mentions that he belongs to the *Kannāra* group (gold smith?) who made the *Pañcalōha* icons; and somebody says that he belongs to the Brahmin community[267]. Though there exists an enigma regarding the date and personality of Karuvūrār, the Siddha cult in Tañjāvūr is now attaining too popular than that of the Śaivism. More number of devotees now started worshiping Siddha Karuvūrār whose shrine installed behind the Sanctum of the Brihadīśvara temple in Tañjāvūr.

Among the authors of the hymns found in this collection of *Tiruviśaipā*, Tirumāḷigai Tēvar, Karuvūr Tēvar and Sēndaṉār deserve special mention. According to the *sthalapurāṇa* of Tiruvāvaḍuturai Karuvūr Tēvar practised *yōga* in this sacred place. His spiritual preceptor Bōgar initiated Tirumāḷigai Tēvar and Karuvūr Tēvar in the methods of worshipping their respective favorite aspects or forms of God, Natarāja and Parāśakti. Heeding the preceptor's command, Tirumāḷigai Tēvar

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264 But still, there are no contemporary records or any temple inscriptions so far found mentioning the details of Rājarāja's and Karuvūr Dēvar's personality and their physical features. R. Venkatraman, *Op.cit.*, p. 12

265 R. Venkatraman, *Op.cit.*, p. 4

266 The list of 18 Siddhas portrayed as imaginary picture in Tañjāvūr Sarasvathi Mahāl is given with their Name, place and caste respectively. They are 1. Tirumūlar – Tillai – Tachar (carpenter); 2. Danvaṇtri – Vaithīsvarankoil – Vaṉigar (Trader); 3. Koṅgaṇavar – Tirupathi – Kosavar (Potter); 4. Kodumba Siddhar (Kudambai Siddhar) – Māyavaram (Mayilāduduṛai) – Kārai kāttar; 5. Rāmadēvar – Aḻagarmalai – Reddy; 6. Vālmīgar – Reddykudi – Vēduvan (Hunter); 7. Patañjali – Ramēśvaram – Chetty; 8. Karuvūrār – Karuvūr – *Kudimagan* Jāti/ Paṉikar; 9. Kumbamuṉi – Tiruvanandapuram – Brahmana; 10. Kamalamuṉi – Tiruvalur – Kannār Jāti (Black Smith?); 11. Nandidēvar – Kāsi – Brahmana; 12. Gōrakar – Poiyur – Vaṉigar (Trader); 13. Edakattār (Edaikathar) – Tiruvaṇṇāmalai – Idayar (Shepherd); 14. Bōgar – Paḻaṉi – Kosavanar (Potter); 15. Saṭṭamuṉi – Sriraṅgam – Seniyar Jāti; 16. Pāmbāṭṭi – Tirukadaiyur – Sēdar Jāti; 17. Macchamuṉi – Tiruparaṅkundram – Sembadavar (fisherman); and 18. Sundaranandar – Madurai – Reddy.

267 See Ganamanjari Sambathkumar, *Sivamayam Kanda Siddhargal*, Sri Indhu Publications, Chennai, 2008, p. 95; C. S. Murugesan, *Pathinen Siddhargal Varalaru*, Kuruñji, Chennai, 2008, p. 84; and S. P. Ramachandiran, *Siddhargal Varalaru*, Thamarai Noolagam, Chennai, 2002, pp. 96-97

arranged separate spots for the *Navakōḍi* Siddhas and for himself to enter into *samādhi-yōga*[268]. Hence the holy town Tiruvāvaḍuturai got the name Navakōdi-cittarpuram.

According to the *sthalapurāṇa*, Karuvūr tēvar visited the Potiyil Hills and was blessed by the Siddha Agastya. It is said that the orthodox priests did not allow him to enter the temple at Karuvūr, despising him to be a follower of *vāmacāra* and also an immoral person. Karuvūr Tēvar acted as if he feared them, reached the sanctum sanctorum and embraced the *Śiva-liṅga* and disappeared. His idol has been installed in the *prakāra* of the shrines of Paśupatēśvara at Karuvūr and Brhadēśvara at Tañjāvūr. In the name of Karuvūr Tēvar many works on medicine and Siddhalogy are available[269].

The *Koṅgumṇḍala śatakam* clubs him with Karuvūr Dēvar[270] (c. 10th century) and says:[271] 'Karuvūrār, the great Siddha born in Karuvūr in the *Koṅgumaṇḍalam*, (i) achieved the *aśṭabandana* merely by spitting his *tāmbūla*,[272] (ii) made a tree shower fish and (iii) wrote the *Tiruvisaippā*[273]. The Karūr Siddhar, who made *aṣtabhandana* through his saliva, and did a miracle of fish raining from a tree, and he who sung the *Tiruvisaippa*, was born at Karūr is also belongs to the *Koṅku Maṇdalam*[274]. Further, the *Koṅkumaṇdala Satakam* gives following accounts on the life of Karūr Siddhar that, "He was born in a Brahmin family. After keenly observing and thoroughly learning the world religious, came to the conclusion that the Śaiva religion as the best one to follow. He visited many temples and sung his *Tiruvisaippa*. Well versed in *Śivayōga*. Whether he was enjoying with women or under deep meditation, he lived without any desire like

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[268] *navakōḍi cittarkku ellām iḍaṅgal naṉgu amaiya-p-paṇṇi civacamayattai nāḷum vaḷarttu naṟceygai yōḍum tavamali nīṟṟin cārbu uḻaittiṭa-c-camāti yōgam uvagaiyō ḍiyaṟṟi mūla eḻuttu aintum ōdi...* S.N. Kandaswamy, *Op.cit.*, p.18

[269] S.N. Kandaswamy, *Op.cit.*, p.19

[270] He is a Śaiva hymnist, whose songs are included in the Tiruvīsaippā, the ninth book of the Śaiva canon.

[271] *Koṅgumaṇḍala Śatakam*: 34.

[272] Tāmbūla, consisting of betel leaves, arecanut and a slight amount of lime, is meant for chewing.

[273] For a summary of these legends, vide., Appendix-1. The author of this *Purāṇam* calls himself 'a disciple of Sattiyanāniyār' (V.Krishnasamy: *Tamiḷil Talapurāṇa īlakkiyam*, p. 140), who lived c. 1700 C.E., (S.A. Ramasamy Pulavar : *Tamil Pulavar Agaravarisai*, Vol.2)

[274] *Vāitham palavechchi lālaṭṭa bhandana māṇpuramīṉ,/ Kāiththu marañchori yachcheithu pathi kaṉinthu senthēṉ Thōiththa Tiruvisaip pāppā torusiddhar Thōṉṛivara,/ Vāitha Karuvūrp pathisērva thuṅKoṅku maṇdalamē.* Karmega Kavingar, *Koṅgumaṇdala Satakam*, verse 34, (Tamil), in T.A. Muttusamy Konar, (ed.) Sadhu Press, Chennai, 1923, p. 37

a lotus leaf in the water. When he reached the Tirukurukūr of Pāṇdya country, Lord Tirumāl (Viṣṇu) appeared in one of his devotee and instructed him to invite and provide hospitality to the Karūr Siddhar. The goddesses Kāli offered him the liquor, when he wishes to get it from the Śiva. He made the *Vaṉṉi* tree to rain fish. He met Agastya at Pothigai hills. As per Bōgar's instruction, he made *aṣtabhandana* by mere spitting his chewed betel nut paste in the Brahadīśvara temple at Tañjāvūr. He ate the thousand men's food and appeased their hunger. He called lord Raṅganātha and got this valuable pearl garland, then offered it to the temple *dāsi*. The Brahmins of Karūr reported to the king that he is eating meat and consuming liquors. When the king examined him, all the liquor pots and meat plates are found in the houses of the Brahmins who reported against him. When the Brahmins of his village chased him to kill, Karūr siddhar ran across the Āmbra River and merged with the *Śivaliṅga*"[275]. References about Karūr Siddhar are also found in *Tiruvāvaduthuṛai Purāṇam*[276] and *Kārūr Purāṇam*[277].

Kañjamalai Siddhar

Tamiḻ tradition records that one Kañjamalai Siddhar happens to be one of the seven students of Tirumūla Nāyaṇār. Reference is also found in *Tirumandiram* about this Kañjamalai Siddhar[278]. Kañjamalaiyan belonged to the hill-tribe of Kañjamalai, now called Siddhar Kōil. But none of his works or references about him is found in the *Periya Jñāna Kōvai*. According to *Koṅkumaṇdala Satakam*, Kañjamalai is located in between Paruthipaḷḷi Nādu, one of the adjacent *Nādus* of the Pūntuṛai Nādu, and Rāsipura Nādu's adjacent nādus like Salēm Nādu and Pūvāṇya Nādu. In this Kañjamalai hills, every year in the Tamiḻ month on Māsi, *Vaḻalai* (*pūnīr*) is growing and diseased persons from various parts of the country visiting here to get that

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[275] T.A. Muttusamy Konar, (ed.), *Koṅgumaṇdala Satakam*, (Tamil), *Op.cit*, p. 37

[276] *Vāguru Cōḻaṉ maṉamakiḻn tiṛañcha vaḷamigu māvudai yāḷō dērkeḻu Śivaliṅ kampuṇarndh daruḷa veḻilperu maṭṭabandhaṉa naṛ pākilai suvaitha pasaiyiṉai yumiḻnthu paṇbodu mirukidap payiṛri mōkamō tarasa ṉākkiya vamutha muḻudhumuṇ duyirtoru nirappi.* See T.A. Muttusamy Konar, (ed.), *Op.cit*, p. 37

[277] *Eṉravar kavaḷath thutka vēinthu Siṛṛilaik duṛṛu niṉṛatōr vaṉṉi taṉṉai nītaru keṉra pōḻthin miṉṛaru vāṉam pūththa mīnila meitha lēippa vaṉṛanith thathuyar mēlōr karuthiṉai yaḷavu kāṇbār*. see T.A. Muttusamy Konar, (ed.), *Op.cit.*, p. 37

[278] *Manthiram peṛṛa vaḻimuṛai mālāṅkan, Indiran Sōman Brahman Rudran Kanduruk Kālaṅgi Kañjamalaiyaṉōdu, Intha eḻuvarum eṉvaḻi yāmē. see Tirumandiram* verse 132

va<u>l</u>alai[279]. Another verse of *Koṅkumaṇdala Satakam* says that Kañjamalai Siddhar belongs to the tradition of Tirumūlar, who wrote *Tirumandiram*, which is an essence of the *āgamas* that originated from the face of the Sadāśivamūrthy. The Kañjamalai, where the Kañjamalai siddhar lives, and the medicinal plants grows are belongs to the Koṅkumaṇdala region[280]. The place is surrounded by forests of sacred *kuśa* grass, *Taruppai pull*, and hence the name *kuśalapatti*, while its forests of *Erithrina Indica*, *kalyāṇa murungai maram*, with its distinctly green leaves and bright red flowers, gave its name Murungaipatti. The place is called Nallaṇṇampatti, about which tradition affords us the following story:

> *"Local children used to play their favourite games there' when a new youth joined them in their games. But this new entrant always won and as a condition of his victory, he demanded that the defeated one receives a "hit" on his head with the knuckles of the victorious one. It so happened that one of the local boys invariably lost and was subjected thus to this punishment. This boy reported the matter to his father who decided to find out the truth and punish, if necessary, the "miscreant!" Thus, it so happened that when the father found out the new youth winning and punishing his son he caught hold of the new youth and gave him a beating with his whip. But, his youth went into the temple and disappeared there. It then became known that he was none other than Kañjamalai Siddhar himself'! To this day one may notice the scars of such whipping on the icon of the Siddhar at the temple there. The place thus came to be recognized as Nallaṇṇampaṭṭi, (Nal = good, Aṇṇan = Brother, Paṭṭi = village) the village of the Good Brother".*

This *va<u>l</u>alai* or what is known in the common parlance as washing soda is duly processed along the prescribed lines and then taken into further preparations. Besides, the river running along this village is known to contain gold in its waters, as folklore and tradition claims that this-gold was alone used to cover the roof of the Golden Temple at Chidambaram, which is not far away from here. The hills surrounding this

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[279] The true importance of this place, Kañjamalai, lies in the fact that it carries its great value in the Tamil siddha alchemical studies and practice. It is here that most practitioners of the art and science of Tamil alchemy gather during the months of April-May to collect the *va<u>l</u>alai*, an ingredient indispensable for the preparation of the supreme recipe known to alchemists of this land as *mūppu. See* Karmega Kaviñgar, *Koṅgumaṇdala Satakam*, verse 35, (Tamil), in T.A. Muttusamy Konar, (ed.) *Op.cit.*, p. 39

[280] *Pañcamugathil luthithidum agama paragamelañj Cheñsol Tirumandi Tirumurai mūlar Tirumarabiṛ Kañjamalai Siddhar vā<u>l</u>vum irathaṅ karaivaḷar Mañju tiga<u>l</u> Kañja māmalai yuṅg Koṅku maṇdalamē*. see Karmega Kavingar, *Koṅgumaṇdala Satakam*, verse 35,(Tamil), T.A. Muttusamy Konar, (ed.) *Op.cit*., p.38

village is also said to abound in what are known as *mahā-mūlikas* or plants and herbs of alchemical potencies and medicinal properties[281].

S.M.L. Lakshmanan Chettiar has recorded that the Siddhas who lived in Kañjamalai (Salem District) had special powers to convert base metals into gold. A village near the Salem steel plant site is even today called Ēḻumātanūr or the village of seven parts; it is stated in the legend of the local temple that experts certified that the gold made by the Siddhas with their miraculous powers contained seven parts of gold, as against ten parts of gold recovered in gold mines[282].

Saṭṭaimuṉi

Saṭṭaimuṉi is also known as Kambaḷi Saṭṭaimuṉi and Kailāya Kambaḷi Saṭṭaimuṉi is a peculiar Siddha. The last among the above names indicate that he came from Kailāya, the Mount Kailāś. *Kambaḷi Saṭṭai* means woolen shirt. He should have worn woolen shirt, because of his association with the frost covered mountain. It is pertinent to state that the Sūfi mystics used to wrap their body with hides or woolen cloth. From his name it is inferred that he belonged to the group of Siddhas attached to the *Kailāya-varga*. There is also a Siddha with the name Saṭṭaimuṉi. It is not known whether he is the same as Kambaḷi Saṭṭaimuṉi[283]. Therefore nothing is clearly known of Saṭṭaimuṉi, except that he was a Śaiva ascetic, who lived at the same time with Agastya, and enjoyed some reputation as a 'poet, philosopher and physician'. He wrote a work on theology, called *Jñāna Nūru* and another on medicine, called *Kalpa Nūru*. He is also believed to have been the author of the *Vāda Nigaṇdu*, a treatise on alchemy which passes under his name[284].

There prevails another tradition that he hailed from Śri Lanka. He is frequently referred to in the *Kāyasiddha* works for his boldness in disclosing the guarded secrets of the Siddha cult and in connection with the fate of his *Dikṣāvidhi*-200 in the hands of Mūlar. It is probable that at first he belonged to neither of the *vargas* but later associated himself with the Kailāyavarga, won the admiration of its chief, and earned

[281] S.A.Sarma, *Op.cit*., p.47

[282] S.M.L. Lakshmanan Chettiar, *Op.cit.*, Magic and Medicine, p. 63

[283] S.N. Kandasamy, *Op.cit.*, pp.57-58

[284] Simon Casie Chitty, *The Tamil Plutarch*, Asian Educational Services, New Delhi, 1982 (rep.), p. 25

the title Kailāya Kambaḷi Saṭṭaimuṉi. Sundarānandar, Rōmariṣi and Tēraiyar were his disciples. The Bōgar-500 connects him with Sīrkāli near Chidambaram and Śriraṅgam near Trichy, but neither oral tradition nor any other literary evidence supports this connection[285].

Koṅkaṇa Siddhar

Koṅgaṇar was a celebrated Tamiḻ Siddha, a philosopher and physician. As his name implies, he was a native of Koṅgunādu, the modern Coimbatore region. It is said that he became an ascetic in his very young age and lived along with the sages of the *Pothigai* Mountain, and learned all branches of knowledge from them. According to *Koṅkumaṇḍala satakam*, Koṅkaṇa Siddha lives at Ūthiyūr hills, which also, belong to the Koṅkumaṇḍalam. He is capable of transmuting the base metals into gold and also prepares gold using the metals like copper and herbal sauces and sulphur etc[286].

The *Koṅkumaṇḍala satakam* refers the Koṅkaṇa Siddha as the prince of Magatha country. By the blessings of one Surānantha muṉi, the prince learned all kinds of arts. Then he went for pilgrimage. After visiting many important temples, finally he reached the Āthipuri. There he again met the Surānanthamuṉi and knew about his previous birth. Then he continued his pilgrimage and worshipped Koṅkanēśvara at the southern land. One day under a *Puṉṉai* tree, when he was worshipping the *Śivaliṅga*, Lord Śiva appeared before him as his guru and instructed him the *aṣtasiddhis* and *Śivayōga*. Then after Koṅkaṇar started converted the copper into gold and gave it to the needy. He put a stroke into ashes by merely starring at it, when it shitted on him. He also developed his friendship with Gōrakṣanātha[287].

[285] R.Venkataraman, *Op.cit.*, p. 57

[286] *Thōṟṟiya sembu Tarāvīyam pithalai sūḻpacchilaich, cāṟṟuda ṉāka rasaṅgkan thakamiṭṭut tandiramāi Thēṟṟundh tavampeṟṟa Koṅkaṇach cittarmun sempoṉseithu, Māṟṟurai kaṇdathu Poṇṇūthi yūr Koṅku maṇdalamē* see Karmega Kaviñgar, *Koṅgumaṇḍala Satakam*, verse 37, (Tamil), in T.A. Muttusamy Konar, (ed.) *Op.cit*, p. 40

[287] *Pātha pattiram paṟpala mūli koṇ, Dūdhu naṟpuda muḷvali yeithiya*
Sūdha vēdhai sin thūrath tugaḷiṉāl, Vāda kuthi kaṉakam vaḻaṅkiṉāṉ.

'*Aiṅkaraṉai yethamaṉa' meṉṉum Tiruppugaḻil, Koṅgiluyir peṟṟuvaḷar thenkaraiyil appar aruḷ koṇdu, udalaṟṟa poruḷ aruḷ vāyē, kuñjara mukaṟkiḷaiya kanthaṉena veṟṟi peṟu Koṅkaṇagirikkulvaḷar perumāḷē.* See Karmega Kavingar, *Koṅgumaṇḍala Satakam*, verse 37, (Tamil), in T.A. Muttusamy Konar, (ed.) *Op.cit.*, p. 40.

However, like Tirumūlar, he paid his homage to the Nandīsar and surrendered himself under his golden feet[288].

According to another tradition, he belonged to Koṅgaṇadēśa, the low country of Western India between the Ghats and the Arabian Sea extending from Goa to Gujarat (Koṇkan Coast). It was one of the traditional fifty-six regions of India. In the *Saṅgam* poems, it is said that the inhabitants of Koṅgaṇa spoke Tuḷu language of the South Dravidian family. Koṅkaṇam is also identified with Koṅkāṇam, the hilly region in the northern portion of Tamiḻnādu, reigned by the chieftain Naṉṉaṉ during the *Saṅgam* period. If that is so, Koṅgaṇar the Siddha belonged to that part of Tamiḻnādu. Saint Aruṇagiri-nāthar refers Koṅgaṇagiri, the hill abode of Lord Muruga. Some scholars attributed Koṅgudēśa to be the native land of Koṅgaṇar. However, the correct location of the place name of Koṅgaṇar is not yet determined[289].

The Ūthiyūr is located in the Coimbatore district of Tamiḻnādu. A shrine at Ūthiyūr is dedicated to Koṅkaṇa Siddha and the name of the Lord Śiva is known as Koṅgaṇēśa. Since this Siddha lived here under the auspices of this lord, he got the name 'Koṅkaṇar'. In the Rāsipuram region, there exists separate hill named after him, Koṅkaṇa Siddhar Malai, and also a separate shrine named Koṅkaṇa Siddha temple. Koṅgaṇar is said to have been a contemporary of the Tirumalisai Ālwār should have lived about the early part of the seventh century C.E. He was a great Śaiva and founded a shrine in honour of Śiva at Tañjāvūr where it is believed, he attained the *Samādhi*. *Kataikkāndam* and *Trikāndam* are some of his important works[290].

He wrote a treatise against polytheism, under the title of *Koṅgaṇar Jñānam*, and two treatises on medicine, one of which is entitled *Kadaikkāndam*, and the other *Guṇavāgadam*. He also authored some works like *Pañcapatchi*, *Vādam*, *Vaithiyar*, etc. He has also written a number of works on *śāktism*. Of them, the *Koṅgaṇar vadakāviyam-300* graphically describes the mode of drawing the *śricakra* and propitiating it. Koṅgaṇar says that he learnt alchemy from the Kailāyavarga. Saṭṭaimuṉi and Koṅgaṇar, who were great friends made many experiments in alchemy

[288] *Koṅkaṇa Siddhar Pātalkaḷ*, verse 7, p. 275

[289] S.N.Kandaswamy, *Op.cit.*, p. 57

[290] V. Ramachandra Dikshitar, *Op.cit.*, pp. 162-167; see also R. Venkataraman, *Op.cit.*, p.55

and the latter was admired by the former too. In the Siddha tradition Koṅgaṇar is much reputed as an alchemist for a *rasaguḷikai* (a mercurial pill) holding which in his mouth he is said to have "travelled not only in the regions of the sun, the moon and the stars, but also where the Supreme Mother Goddess dwells' this celestial excursion of Koṅgaṇar is frequently referred to in many *Kāyasiddha* works[291]. He is also the author of 111 stanzas called *Vālaikkummi*. The word *Vālai* denotes a young girl, who is worshipped as a form of *Śakti*, the Goddess and the term *Kummi* means a female dance with clapping hands and singing songs rhythmically.

> *Oh! Young maid! The roaming bull should be tethered;*
> *desired should be cut; the vital breath should be contained;*
> *The branch beyond reach should be bent; we know not how*
> *long this body will last!* [292]

This has a mystic meaning in which the roaming bull may refer to the mind and eluding branch of truth. Besides, like Tirumūlar, Koṅkaṇar also says about the existence of one god and one *Vēda*, *guru* etc. The following is a stanza taken from the *Koṅgaṇar Jñānam*:

> *There is but one God, there is but one Vēda, there is but one way of initiation by the good spiritual guide, there is but one kind of bliss which he grants, and there is but one genus amongst mankind upon the earth. They who hold the country by asserting that there are four Vēdas, and six sects, and many gods, will surely enter the fiery hell*[293].

He also sung that the one-tusked child Viṉāyaka is Gaṇapati or Gaṇēśa with the elephant head, the youthful god who is remover of all obstacles[294]. He also sung that *Vālai* is the Śakti Pārvati, the consort of Śiva, and *pattini*, the perfect female and perfect wife as well as Sarasvati, the goddess of wisdom and knowledge. He also described that the *Vālai* is worshipped by all the Siddhas[295].

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[291] See R. Venkataraman, *Op.cit.*, p.54.

[292] *Koṅkana Siddhar Pātalkaḷ*, verse 43, p. 280; Simon Casie Chitty, *Op.cit.*, pp. 50-51

[293] Simon Casie Chitty, *Op.cit.*, pp. 50-51

[294] *Koṅkana Siddhar Pātalkaḷ*, verse. 2, p. 274,

[295] *Ibid.*, verse. 3, p. 274, see Kamil V. Zvelebil, (2003), pp. 167-169.

Later Siddhas

Akappēy, A̱lukani, Itaikkādar, Kaduveli, Enāti, Kāḷai, Kudampai and Pāmbāṭṭi are considered as the latter Siddhars in the traditional classification. They differed in no way from the earlier ones, except that their poetry was much inferior in quality but easier to understand than that of the earlier Siddhars. Undoubtedly, these later Siddhars sang their songs for the masses using the common speech and adopting a simple style.

Agappēy Siddhar

Agappēy Siddhar is one of the later Siddha, who probably belongs to the 15th century C.E. He has authored 90 songs, which are composed in simple language and form, but deeply mystical. The Siddha under reference personified the inner resident (*agam*), which may be mind or consciousness, as a female devil and addressed it in all his poems, communicating his rare experiences and mystic insights. Since the mind is restless and rambling beyond the control of one's self, it is metaphorically called a devil, the terrific wanderer. The refrain, *agappēy* occurs at least twice in almost all his poems and hence the Siddha is named after this rare usage. Some of the Tamiḻ Siddhas are known by the tag-lines found in their songs. He addressed his songs to the "demon of the soul". He offer an expose of Siddha doctrines and instructions, from a vision of of the evolution of the universe and man to a total mystical 'nihilism' in the acceptance of pure Void. Often his stanzas are coached in twilight language. For instance, he used the term '*intu'* to denote the moon, which also refers here the male semen and '*iravi'*, the Sun that denotes the menstrual blood[296]. His nihilist view of world and salvation is in some ways reminiscent of the more polished thought of that earlier south Indian mystic, Nāgārjuna[297].

I do not exist
The Lord does not exist
The self does not exist
The Teacher does not exist [298]

Mantras do not exist
Experience does not exist

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[296] *Agappēy Siddhar Songs*, Verse. 47

[297] Kamil V. Zvelabil, (2003), p. 163; see also S.N. Kandaswamy, *Op.cit.*, p.53

[298] *Agappēy Siddhar Songs*, Verse. 70, p. 209; quoted from Kamil V. Zvelabil, *The Poets*, p.109

Tantras do not exist
Doctrines have been destroyed [299]

Rites are just Devi's play
Knowledge – a hollow stable
The Lord is but an illusuion
Everything is like that [300]

Why and what for to study?
Why and what for to act?
All set rules and all forms
have been burnt and annulled [301]

All manifested actions
You see are only Void
Those which in fact do not appear
Will appear in Pure Nothingness. [302]

A̲lug(k)aṇi Siddhar

A̲lugaṇi Siddha is also one of the later Siddhas, but nothing is known about him. From the spelling found in the Tami̲l version, it may right to say that he composed his songs beautifully and hence, he name as A̲lugaṇi. (*A̲lagu* = beauty + *Aṇi* = rhetoric skill). But some of the scholars interpreted his name as A̲lukaṇṇi, the words denotes a person with weeping eyes. Though the word is not used either as a refrain or a rare occurrence, the Siddha is named A̲lukaṇṇi, since his verses heave the sigh of depression. It does not mean that he suffered from despondency and despair. His expressions are saturated with mournful emotions. In some editions instead of *A̲lukaṇṇi*, the corrupt form of the word *A̲lukuṇi* is also found[303].

Pāmbāṭṭi Siddhar

One of the most famous among the later Tami̲l Siddhas is Siddha Pāmbāṭṭi. He is believed to have lived between 15th and 17th centuries. Based on the chronological assessment of the poet's lexical use he was dated between 14th and 15th century[304].

[299] *Ibid*., Verse. 71, p. 210; *Ibid*., p.109

[300] *Ibid*., Verse. 72, p. 210; *Ibid*., p.109

[301] *Ibid*., Verse. 77, p. 209; *Ibid*., p.110

[302] *Ibid*, Verse. 88, p. 212; *Ibid*., p. 110; see also Peter Heehs (ed.), *Op.cit.*, p. 288; S.N. Kandaswamy, *Op.cit.*, p.60

[303] S.N. Kandaswamy, *Op.cit.*, p.60; see also Kamil V. Zvelabil, (2003), p. 166

[304] Pāmbāṭṭi Siddhar speaks of a musket, which was first used in India in 1368 by Bukka I of Vijayanagara Empire and the musket salute received by Vasco Da Gama in 1498, means the Siddha was lived much earlier than the 17th century. See David C. Buck, *Dance! Snake! Dance!*, *A Translation with Comments of the Song of Pampatti-Cittar*, A Writers Workshop Publication, Calcutta, 1976, p. xiii

According to the Bōgar-7000[305] "Pāmbāṭṭi Siddhar had been a snake charmer before he was initiated into the mysteries of *Siddhism* of Saṭṭaimuṉi, 'When the former was engaged in catching a rare snake, called *Navaratṇappāmbu'*. If Pāmbāṭṭi Siddhar was a contemporary of Saṭṭaimuṉi, the former would belong to the 17th century[306]. A cave in Marudamalai has now become more associated with Pāmbāṭṭi Siddhar[307].

Pāmbu literally means a serpent and *Pāmbāṭṭi* means the snake-charmer who makes the snakes to dance. In the poems of the Siddha, the coiled power (*kuṇḍalini-śakti*) is often personified as a serpent. In all his 129 poems, the Siddha exhorts the serpent to dance, realizing the greatness of the Supreme Lord Śiva. The refrain remains in all poems *ādu pambē*! (Dance! Snake! Dance!), in the vocative case. All these songs are modeled on the songs of the professional snake charmer. The name Pāmbāṭṭi 'is an epithet given him by his admirers, probably because of his poetically and psychologically ingenious use of snake dance imagery[308]. Hence, the Siddha was named as Pāmbāṭṭi Siddhar, who has perfected *kuṇḍalini yōga* and attained immortality[309].

His songs are sung by the popular masses of Tamiḻnādu even today, because of his '*Cintu'* type of versification composed in folk-song meter and mostly in twilight language. He is perhaps the most outspoken of all the Siddhas, ridiculing idol worship, the *Vēdas*, the *Āgamas* and other scriptures and denouncing caste. He is egoistic and boasts of the immense power of the Siddhas[310]. The structure of the stanzas of Siddha Pāmbāṭṭi is composed in two styles. Of the 129 verses, the first 111 verses are composed in 4 lines and rests of 18 songs are in 8 lines[311]. Many people sing his songs as the folk poems of snake-charmers, which gives an unusual insight into the psyche of ordinary people. These poems stand as a testimony to the

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305 Bōgar-7000: IV, 576-581

306 R. Venkataraman, *Op.cit*.

307 Marudamalai is a hill located around twelve kilometers to the west of Coimbatore. It has a small shrine dedicated to Lord Muruga, a Tamil deity, atop this hill. A natural cave near to this temple is considered as the *Samādhi* of the Pāmbāṭṭi Siddha since 1935, which is still under worship and attaining more popularity among the devotees. *Census of India, 1961*, vol. IX, part XI, iii, Government of Tamilnadu, Madras, p. 208

308 David C. Buck, *Op.cit.*, p. x

309 S.N. Kandasamy, *Op.cit.*, p.59; see also Peter Heehs, *Op.cit.,*p. 289; T. N. Gaṇapathy, *Bōgar*, p. 29

310 K. Meenakshi, *Op.cit.*, p.118; see also A.V. Subramania Aiyar, *Op.cit.,* p. 64

311 See Kōvēndhan, *Pāmbāṭṭi Siddhar songs,* Verses. 130, pp.245-265

egalitarian culture against the looming threat of *Vēdic*-brahmanism. One of the Pāmbāṭṭi's verses ends on a note where he talks of 'setting fire to divisions of caste' and 'taking philosophical questions to the market place' this leaves no doubt about the real intentions of the Siddhas[312]. Thus no wonder to say that Zvelebil rightly called him as 'the poet of the Powers'.

Through his poems he raises the *kuṇḍalini* force that lies below like a snake. He eulogizes his tribe and boasts of their supernatural powers. He puffs up his chest and says: "We can control all the five elements; destroy this great universe and create a new one"[313]. In fact he is the only Siddhar who boasts of the eight kinds of occult or supernatural powers. He denounces caste differences and bawls: "We will set fire to the disgusting caste system"[314]. One's caste, culture, physical appearance, birth possessions and occupation do not matter. He who has dedicated his all at the feet of the Lord and who constantly remembers the Lord succeeds in attaining God consciousness, no matter whether he is a high-born or a low-born. He rails at the four *Vēdas*, the various kinds of *purāṇas*, *śāstras* and *tantras* by calling them rubbish[315], and sings of Lord Śiva as the Supreme Power of the Universe. Above all he intimidates all men not to lust for women and also condemns the physical charms of women[316].

Siddha Iḍaikkādar

Iḍaikkādar literally means 'the Siddha of the pasture forest'. Except his name, nothing is known about his personal biography. There are some speculations regarding his native place. The *Abhidānacintāmaṇi* (20th century) records two traditions: (i) that Iḍaikkāḍār hailed from Iḍayanttiṭṭu in Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam and that once when he was grazing his flock on the Podiyil hills, he was initiated into *Siddhism* by a Navasiddha, and (ii) that he was born at Iḍaikkādu, near Madurai. According to another tradition Iḍaikkāḍar was born in Iḍaikkādu and died in Tiru-Iḍaikkādu, both in the

312 Braj Ranjan Mani, *Op.cit.*, p. 161.

313 *Pāmbāṭṭi Siddhar songs,* Verses. 31-32, pp.249

314 *Ibid*., 123, p.264

315 *Ibid*., Verses. 98, p.259

316 *Ibid*.,Verses. 50-59, pp.252-253

Kaṉṉiyākumari District. *Koṅgumaṇḍala śatakam* says[317] Iḍaikkāḍar hailed from Koṟṟavanūr in the Koṅgu country. Rāmadēvar, a *Kāyasiddha* of 17th century says that Iḍaikkādar is from Cochin (Kēraḷā). He came to Kaḷakkāḍ (Tirunelveli District) to meet Sundarānandar and remained there for a long time. In that case Iḍaikkādar belongs to 17th century. Further, The *Abhidānacintāmaṇi* also records a legend about Idaikkādar, that due to his prescience that there was going to be a drought for twelve years. Therefore he trained his flock to live by poisonous herbs capable of growing in dry area. During the height of the drought, the surprised *navagrahas* visited Iḍaikkādar in order to know the secret of existence of the Siddha and his flock, while all others were dead. Thus Siddha greeted them with the goat's milk which due to the effect of the poisonous herbs, made the *navagrahas* fall asleep. The Siddha quickly arranged their positions in such a way that it rained sufficiently to make the earth prosperous[318].

Simon Casie Chitty recorded that Iḍaikādar, so named after Iḍaikaḻi-nādu, the land of his nativity, was a poet from his earliest youth. Having heard that Kulesa Pāṇḍyan, who then reigned at Madurai, added to the title of a king the still more enduring distinction of a poet, and had a seat on the College bench, Iḍaikādar sought to secure his patronage by composing a panegyric on him, and reciting it in his presence; but the king took no notice of it. Stung to the quick at the neglect, he retired to a temple at Vada Madurai, wither Kapilar, and the rest of the professors of the College, who did not approve of the king's conduct, followed him. The king on receiving this intelligence went to Vada Madurai and by much entreaty prevailed on him, and the professors to return to the College and having heard his poem again recited, honoured him by the gift of an elephant, and a horse, and by the donation of lands and gold. Satisfied with this he took leave of the king, and returned to his country. He is believed to be a contemporary of Tiruvaḷḷuvar. It is said that Iḍaikādar authored a grammatical treatise entitled '*Ūsimuri'*, which is quoted by one Guṇasēkerar, the Commentator of the *Karigai*[319].

This Siddha also seems to get his name from the place where he lived. U.V. Swaminatha Aiyar located Iḍai-Kādu, a place near Orattanāḍu in Tañjāvūr District. In

[317] *Koṅgumaṇḍala Śatakam*: 38.

[318] R. Venkataraman, *Op.cit.*, pp. 70-71.

[319] Simon Casie Chitty, *Op.cit*., pp. 30-31

Tamil̠ the term *kādu* means the pastoral region (*mullai-nilam*). It is the wooded land between the high lands and the low lands. He also lived on the Aruṇachala Mountain at Tiruvaṇṇāmalai. *Iḍai* (*iḍai jāti*) denotes shepherd caste, associated with the region. His native name is unknown. True to his name, he composed verses of folk metre, addressing the shepherds Tāṇḍava Kōn and Nārāyaṇa Kōn in a dialogue expressing rare thoughts[320]. Idaikkādar seems to be a disciple of Koṅgaṇar or perhaps Bōgar. The story goes that he was a cowherd by caste. Once one of the Navasiddhas passed by and wanted some milk to quench his thirst. When it was readily offered the Siddhar initiated him. From that time Idaikkādar became a *Jñāni*. Besides this, there are several floating traditions connected to him[321].

He authored 130 songs which are highly realistic in tone, set in the form of a dialogue between two shepherds, Tāṇtavakkōṇār and Nārāyaṇakkōṇār. Both of them stress the need for man to understand himself fully and ridicule those whose ignore the Light within and wander with an oil lamp in had only to fail into the deep sea of ignorance. In a powerful yet simple language Idaikkādar expresses his mystic ideas: "Whatever your eyes see are mere dreams. Be sure that the world will perish and your body doubtless will decay. What is everlasting is only the Divine". His poems suggest that the seeker of the Divine must leave behind the over trodden tracks of ignorance and falsehood and walk on the path of Truth and Light. The Divine is present within him, around him and above him.

In his songs, some verses are addressed to the cow (*paśu*), the domestic animal of the pastoral region. For example, he sung towards the cow saying that 'O Gentle cow! Even if I had everything- if I had not the Lord's Grace, you can think of me as one who has nothing'[322]. Then again in another song he says 'O gentle cow! Apart from God's help there's nothing to be sought. The holy feet of the father are the very breath of life'[323]. Besides cow, this Siddha also speaks to the dragon fly, birds, peacock, to the flute[324], etc.

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[320] S.N. Kandaswamy, *Op.cit.*, p.56

[321] V. Ramachandra Dikshitar, *Op.cit.*, pp. 162-167

[322] *Idaikāṭṭu Siddhar Pātalkaḷ*, verse 37, p. 228; in Kamil V. Zvelebil, (2003), p. 161

[323] *Ibid.*, verse 38, p.228 ; in Kamil V. Zvelebil, (2003), p. 161

[324] *Ibid.*, verses 71-100 respectively, pp. 231-234

In Śaiva Siddhānta, the word *paśu* connotes soul, and hence the address in the Siddha poems to a cow may be taken to have been directed to the soul. There are some verses addressed to the shepherd to blow the *kuḻal*, (flute) which is peculiar to the pastoral land. Each line of some verses ends with the refrain, *pāl kaṛa*[325], to milk (a cow or other domestic animal). Again, the Siddha exhibits his allegiance to the pastoral region when he addresses the shepherd in many poems to tie the cattle (a symbol of controlling *karma*, *indriya*, *pāśa*, *mala* and *ahaṅkāra*) in the shed. In some verses, the beetles peculiar to the rural region are commanded to flutter and fly, singing the spiritual victory. Some poems are addressed straightly to the people in general and some others to the mind and ignorance. There are some verses addressed to the birds like cuckoo, peacock and *hamsa* (a swan like bird). These songs are often filled with theistic devotion. A close study of the verses reveals the fact that the anonymous Siddha should have belonged to the shepherd caste and hailed from the pastoral region and hence, he held the name Iḍai Kādar, concealing his original name.

Siddha Kudambai

Kudambai means the earring. In its extension of meaning the word denotes a lady. In all her poems, the Siddha addresses the soul as *kudambai*. The vocative form of this word is *kudambāi* which occurs at the end of the second line of every verse. Hence, the Siddha came to be known as Kudambai Cittar[326]. Kudambai addresses all his 32 songs in a symbolic language to a woman wearing *kudambai*. In the presence of the Supreme Being all are one. Everyone lives for himself and it is only He who lives for others. Conscience is our guide; wisdom is the best teacher; World is the university and the best friend is God Himself. He pleads that for the one who had realized himself, all other things in this world are trivial and insignificant. He questions: "Why does one need an external appearance when one had conquered the Lord of Death?"[327].

Often Kudambai Siddha expressed his mystic ideas through symbolic terms. He asks that "To those who drink mango juice and live on the mountain, what use is

325 *Ibid.*, verses 101-106, p. 235

326 S.N. Kandaswamy, *Op.cit.* p. 58

327 *Kudambai Siddhar Pātalkaḷ*, verse. 26, p. 271

coconut juice? O Lady with the ear-stud! What use is the coconut juice?"[328]. Unless the reader knows that 'mango juice' and 'coconut juice' stand for *kuṇḍalini* force and toddy respectively, the entire verse will become enigmatic. The song actually means: "Those who awaken *kuṇḍalini*, the *yōga-śakti* lying coiled or asleep in the inner body, and make it meet the Divine Consciousness, enjoy a bliss which is beyond the grip of words. The supposed joy given by the intoxicating drink like toddy fades into insignificance when compared to the bliss. And only the Siddhars who are always on a high know this". Most of his songs are written in simple form and languages are really with metaphors and symbols. He occasionally uses typical Siddha symbolism of various spices, herbs, plants and remedies[329]. All of his songs are rhetorical questions[330].

The Siddhar, in about thirty verses of three lines each, brilliantly expressed his ideas. The poetical compositions of Kudambai Siddhar are direct, chaste and simple, which reach even the common people easily and create some awareness among them. Like other Tami<u>l</u> Siddhas, Kudambai Siddhar also uses the words lilke *veṭṭa veli*, *veli oli*, and *śūnyam* as referring to reality. His songs distinguish true spiritual life without any caste-marks. In the words of Kudambai Siddhar, true spirituality consists in spiritual rebirth. This interior transformation once attained, there is then no longer any need for the regenerative *kalpa* medicaments, nor for the physical regeneration. The Siddha undoubtedly speaks from the pinnacle of his realisation and the disciple-daughter evidently belongs to the "best qualified" to receive this wisdom teaching[331].

Kaduveli Siddhar

Recently a place called Irumbai is largely associated with Siddha Kaduveli and bears some interesting legends. Besides, in Irumbai temple there is a bronze image of a Kaduveli Siddhar seated on tiger skin, found in the *Arthamaṇḍapa* (next to the Amman Shrine) of the Mākālēsvara temple. According to the legend, under the reign of the Cō<u>l</u>ā King Kulottuṅga III, Irumbai region was ruled by a petty king

[328] *Ibid*., verse. 28, p. 271

[329] *Ibid*., verse. 27, p. 271

[330] Kamil V. Zvelebil, (2003), p. 164; Zvelebil also translated the songs of Kudambai Siddha and some of them are found in his another work '*The Poets of the Powers'*, pp. 111-112.

[331] S.A. Sarma, *Op.cit.*, pp. 57-59

Guṇasīlan who had Kōṭṭakarai (now Auroville) as his capital. For many years the Kōṭṭakarai region remained under great famine due to continuous drought without rain. The Lord Irumbai Mākālēśvara appeared in King's dream and informed him to disturb the penance of the Siddha, who sat near the temple pond, and then the situation will be changed. Thus, King asked Sundaravaḷḷi, a temple *dāsi*, to smoothly disturb the penance of the Siddha and she did the same successfully. Besides this, there are also few other legends popular in this region about the Kaduveli Siddhar.

Kaduveli Siddhar is often referred in some of the lists of eighteen Siddhas and in some of the scholarly works he was accommodated in the lists of latter Siddhas. He authored 34 stanzas in a folk song meter, stressing various features of worldly life. He believed to have lived in 16th and 17th centuries C.E. Except his tentative dates, nothing is known about him. Even his name is a mystery and seems to be derived from a special refrain associated with his poems such as '*kaduveli*'[332] means 'expansive space'. Like the earlier Siddhas, he also a believer of *yōga* and protest against the then existing religious practices and social life[333]. His original name, nativity and period are still more obscure. Kaduveli Siddhar probably used the term *veṭṭaveli* as a symbol of the ultimate[334]. He used the term *Veṭṭaveli* in two songs which means 'empty space'[335]. Since he considers the physical body as perishable and the world as unreal, R. Venkataraman classified Kaduveli Siddha in the group of the *Ñānasiddhas*. He was primarily a Śaivite[336] yearning for a mystical union with God achieved through deep devotion and *laya yōga*[337]. To him, Śiva is the only God and his songs generally show a strong desire for a mystic merger in Śiva[338]. Most of his poems are largely concerned with advice on moral subjects. He stresses that don't give curse, don't lie, don't gamble or cheat which destroys your surroundings as a whole. So follow the path of *bhakti* which gives a man some benefits and it is only

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332 K. Meenakshi, 'The Siddhas of Tamil Nadu: A Voice of Dissent', in R. Champakalaksmi and S. Gopal (eds), *Tradition, Dissent and Ideology: Essays in Honour of Romila Thapar*, OUP, Delhi, 1996, pp.117-119

333 *Ibid*.

334 R. Venkatraman, *Op.cit*., pp. 68-69

335 *Kaduveli Siddhar Pātal*: Verse. 10 and 22, in Kōvēndhan, *Op.cit*., pp. 238-243.

336 *Ibid.,* Verse.26

337 R. Venkatraman, *Op.cit*., pp. 7-8

338 *Kaduveli Siddhar Pātal*: 6 (as *Paraman*); in song 26 as Śiva and song 34 as *Īsan*; R. Venkatraman, *Op.cit*, p. 98

best way to attain salvation[339]. He denounces drinking liquor and consuming opium[340]. He mostly stress on devotion, discipline, meditation, *aṣṭāṅga-yōga*[341]. Some of them are most famous among the rural mass and even in most of street plays during festivals, few of his songs were sung. One of the famous songs is "*Nanda vaṉathilōr āṇḍi*….", which means,

"In a park there was a seer. For all of ten
months, he pestered a potter; and then
came away with a little water-pot. He danced
and he danced, then threw it down and smashed it" [342].

Thus, Kaduveli Siddhar evidently is a moralist. His composition consists of aphoristic moral commands of do's and don'ts, aimed to admonish the listener never to stray from the straight path of devotion to the God. His songs show his masterly illustration of the use of literary skill and creative imagination[343].

Madurai Vālai Sāmi

Vālai Sāmi, another Siddha, has envisaged that the Siddha is one who dwells in the city of unique and great space (*peru-veli*). In the language of the Siddhas, the epithets *peru-veli*, *veṭṭa-veli* and *pāḻ veli* indicated the colorless and adjunctless Ultimate Reality[344]. He seems to be a devotee of *Śakti* as a virgin. From the very name, it is presumed that he lived in Madurai, where Lord Sokkanātha as a Siddha performed many sports and miracles.

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339 *Ibid.,* Verses 1, 2, 18 and 30

340 *Kaduveli Siddhar Pātal*: 29; through this song, Siddha advices the general public (and not in particular to any Siddha), as don't consume opium, don't drink toddy, don't die by fear and don't read the books written by the person without *bhakti*. In any of this place, he never refers the drinking and opium consuming habits of Siddhas. However R. Venkatraman (*Op.cit*, p. 98) and K. Meenakshi (*Op.cit*, p. 119), mentions that Siddha Kaduveli vehemently criticized the habit of drinking and consuming opium in his songs.

341 *Kaduveli Siddhar Pātal*: 31

342 *Kaduveli Siddhar Pātal*: 4. Even today this song is modified and come in many Tamiḻ Cinemas and naughty youths modify this song by replacing different words with the same music. Songs of Kaduveli Siddha stanza 4; See also David C. Buck, *Op.cit.*, pp. 78-79

343 S.A.Sarma, *Op.cit*., p.63

344 S.N. Kandaswamy, *Op.cit*., p.53

Puṇṇākkīsar

Some Siddhas preferred to assume funny and fantastic names of loathsome nature, perhaps to attract the attention of the readers. One of them is popular with the name *puṇṇākku-īsar*. The word *puṇṇākku* is the corrupt form of *piṇṇākku* which means oil-cake, being the product of the residue of oilseeds after crushing in the oil press (*Sekku*). In the ordinary usage of the people, the word is used contemptuously to denote good for nothing fellow. However, the particular Siddha who delighted in calling himself as an oil-cake came to be known Puṇṇākkīsar. The word *īsar* denotes Śiva or God. It amuses everybody to call the Siddha the Lord of oil-cake![345]

Kāgapusuṇḍar

According to the legend, he was the father of the Siddha Rōmariṣi. Once he met the ascetic Vaśiṣta and told him that he met in his lifetime eight Vaśiṣtas like him. *Kāgam* means crow. The etymology of the word *pusuṇḍar* is not found. If it is derived from *puṣam* meaning dried cowdung, i.e., excrement, then it may be presumed that the Siddha was fond of calling himself a crow's excrement despicable by the ordinary people. From such names, the Siddhas revealed that they treated both the beautiful and the ugly alike, since they developed a sense of equanimity and neutrality towards all things which were normally classified into the pleasant and the painful. One scholar adduced a fantastic interpretation tor the name Kāgapusuṇḍar. According to him, the Siddha under reference transfigured himself into a crow and roved everywhere. This kind of definition is used perhaps due to folk-etymology[346].

Pūṉai Kaṇṇar

This pseudo-name denotes the Siddha with eyes resembling those of a cat. Some people have cat-like eyes and hence they are called Pūṉai Kaṇṇar even in the current usage. One of the nine gems (*nava-maṇi*) *vaidūrya* gets the name "cat's eye" as per the Tamiḻ Lexicon. But, in the early Tamiḻ epic *Silappatikāram* and its classical commentaries, *pūṉai-kaṇ* denotes *puṣparāga* (topaz). Though the Siddha may be

345 *Ibid*., p.61

346 *Ibid*.,

considered as a cat-eyed man, he should have been an invaluable gem among the *yōgins* and *Jñānis*[347].

Gaṇapati Dāsar

He is the author of *Neñcaṛi-viḷakkam* of one hundred verses composed in *virutta* metre. At the end of each poem he addressed his mind to pay homage to the Lord of Nāgai, the contracted form of Nāgapaṭṭiṇam. He was an avowed *Vēdāntin*. In the epilogue of the text, there are three poems mentioning his name Gaṇapati Dāsar. Again one may think that this name also was not the original one, since it means the servant of Lord Gaṇapati, the symbolic representation of *Praṇava*, the primal sound *Aumkāra*, the root or *mūla-mantra*. The Siddha invokes Lord Gaṇēśa in the prologue poem and calls Him Mūla-Guruparaṉ with elephant face, to bless him who offers flowers at the feet of great souls who rooted out desire from their heart[348].

Sūryāṉandar

The text *Sūryāṉandar Sūttiram* consists of thirteen long verses of *virutta* metre. In the opening verse, he venerated Lord Dakśiṇamūrti, God as preceptor or divine *guru*. He mentioned that the mystic knowledge of the Siddha system was originally communicated by Śiva who in turn revealed the same to Sūryānandar. The real name of the Siddha is not known. In the 12th verse, there is a line, *Sūryāṉandaṉ ivai sollum nūlē* suggesting the author's name. It may be an acquired one or real name, but so far unable to be settled definitely[349].

Pūraṇāṉandar

He is the author of Śivayōga-Sāram. In the opening verse, the Siddha explains the reason for getting the epithet Pūraṇāṉandaṉ to be his name. His preceptor Nāraṇa Dēsigar, who mastered all the scriptures and eradicated the ignorance and delusion of his disciples, was the very embodiment of *jñāna*, delivering the mystic message to the Siddha and christened him with the name Pūraṇāṉandaṉ. Hence, it is clear that the

[347] *Ibid,* p.61
[348] *Ibid,* p.62
[349] *Ibid*.,

name was not the original, given by his parents but bestowed on him by his preceptor at the time of initiation[350].

Yākkōbu Siddhar

His original name was Rāmadēvar. In his text, *Yākkōbu Vaidya Cintāmaṇi*, verse seven, he has made a reference to his visit to Mecca by teleportation and had dialogues with the Islamic *jñānis*. Though he was victorious in the debates and discussions with them, he became a convert giving due regard to their respect and affection and was given the name Jacob. The Tamilised form of Arab word Jacob was Yākkōbu which he held for the rest of his life. In the beginning poem of *Yākkōbu Vaidya Cintāmaṇi*, he made obeisance to the Nabimār, the messengers of Allah. In the subsequent verses, he exhibited equal attachment and devotion to the gods of Hindu Pantheon. Then he proceeded to discuss in detail the different kinds of native medicine along with their ingredients and their effect in curing many an ailment[351].

Kārai Siddhar

Like many other Siddhas of contemporary period, the original name of this Kārai Siddhar (1918) is also not known. But, R.Venkataraman in his work mentioned that he was the son of Kṛiśṇamāchārya, a Vaiṣṇva Brahmin of Trivandrum (Tiruvaṇandapuram of Kēraḷā) and a profound scholar in Sanskrit. The 'Siddha' was initiated into *yōga* by a *Guru* at Lakśman Jhula in the Himalayas. After wandering in many places he returned finally to his home at Tiruvandrum. Then he engaged in married life and had two children. His only work, the *Kaṉagavaippu* is very much influenced by the Siddha lore such as alchemy, medicine, magic and *Yōga*[352].

Tattuvarāyar

Tattuvarāyar of the 17th century also included in one of the lists of Tamiḻ Siddhas. He also wrote against idolatory, but his knowledge and relation between the schools of medicine (*Siddha-Vaidyam*) is not clear[353]. Tattuvarāyar was the disciple of

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350 *Ibid*.,

351 *Ibid*.,

352 R.Venkataraman, *Op.cit*., p.171

353 K.A.N. Sastry, *Op.cit*., pp. 95-96.

one Svarūpānanda Deśikar, and both the ascetics lived during the 14th and 15th centuries, who were also the authors of many devotional poems and songs remarkable for the simplicity of their diction and their wide appeal to the common man; the songs were of the nature of ditties which created many new models for subsequent composers. Both compiled an anthology in Tami̱l on philosophy of *Advaita* which together conserve much of Tami̱l Śaivism[354].

Kuṇḍalini Māmuṉivar

Kuṇḍalini Māmuṉi is believed to be a great Siddha. The locals accept that he is a Siddha who spent most of his life in the Tiruvakkarai temple and sang in its praise[355]. He breathed his last in that temple and a *Samādhi* was built over his mortal remains within the temple premises. The *Sthalapurāṇa* states that Vakkarāsūra, a demon who belongs to the tradition of Kuṇḍalini Muṉivar ruled this place[356]. The original name of this Siddha or the period of his existence is unknown[357]. However, the term '*Kuṇḍalini*' represents one of the popular *yōgic* practices which have been often practiced by the Siddhas. By practicing the *Kuṇḍalini yōga*, this Siddha might have got this name.

Tāyumāṉavar (1705-1742 C.E.)

Tāyumāṉavar is a great Śaiva saint and a living force in South Indian religious life. He was named after Tāyumānavar, the Lord enshrined in the temple at Trichy. A Vellāla by birth, he was at first attached to the temple of Vēdāraṇyam (Tañjāvūr District). Being the son of Kāḍiliyappa Piḷḷai of Vēdaraṇyam, a minister under Vijayaraṅga Sokkanātha Nāyaka of Madurai[358], Tāyumānavar succeeded to this father's office. When the ruler died, the widowed queen tempted him with the offer of her hand and kingdom. This was the turning point. After giving her much good advice,

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354 *Ibid.*, p. 134.

355 However, none of his songs are available or popularly spread over in this area.

356 Different types of legends are there regarding this Siddha. Traditions say that, he was the grandfather of the Vakkarasūran. See C.S.Murugesan, *Pugazh Mikka Kāli Tirukkōilgaḷ* (Tami̱l), Sankar Pathipagam, Chennai, 2010, p.89

357 In fact the original names of many popular siddhas are still not known to anybody. Most of these Siddhas were given with Pseudo names by the respective scholars who worked on those Siddha literatures. For instance, the name of the Siddhars like Pāmbāṭṭi, Agapēy, Kudambai are not their original names. These are names given to them by the refrains which they often use in their songs.

358 This Nāyak ruler had Trichy as his headquarters; see R.Venkataraman, *Op.cit*., p. 168

Tāyumāṉavar left her service to become a seeker of God and Truth. Meanwhile, his brother arranged his marriage, thus Tāyumāṉavar agreed and got married. A son was born to him, but his wife died. The boy was named Kaṉakasabhāpati and grew to be a learned man. However, after the death of his wife, Tāyumāṉavar became an ascetic and was initiated to mysticism by one Mouṉaguru of the line of Tirumūlar[359]. His hymns constitute a simple and moving record of his experiences and are still popular, being often sung in musical concerts. He tries to reconcile Advaita and Śaiva Siddhānta by playing down their differences often over-emphasized by controversialists[360].

He became a profound student of Śaiva literature. He happened to saw Mouṉagurusāmi and expressed his desire to be initiated into the mystery of *ātmajñāna.* The Sāmi was pleased and promised to give him the initiation in their next meeting. Accordingly, Mouṉagurusāmi permitted him to become a *sanyāsin* and instructed him the *Śivayōga*. From that day he became a wandering ascetic, visited a number of sacred places of pilgrimage and at least got his *samādhi* in Lakśmipuram near Rāmnād[361]. Like other mystics, he longs for direct communion with the Lord. According to him God is *Sat-Cit-Ānanda*- the everlasting bliss[362].

The description of the Siddhas in the poems of Tāyumāṉavar

Tāyumāṉavar says that the Siddhas possess an eternal body which is spiritualized by dematerialization;[363] they have reconciled the *Vēdānta* and the *Siddhānta*,[364] and can turn even potsherds into gold, make the poor very rich, move to the ends of the world in no time, become equal to gods and, in short, 'can bring heaven on earth'. He ecstatically declares to have made his brazen body a golden one with the grace of God. Tāyumāṉavar recalls the glory of the Tamiḻ Siddha Brotherhood in his "invocatory-verses" and sings; "O Immanent-transcendent

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[359] Tāyumāṉavar in *Kalaikkaḷañjiyam*: Vol. V, pp. 581 f.

[360] K.A.N. Sastry, *Op.cit*., p. 135.

[361] V.R. Ramachandra Dikshitar, *Op.cit*., pp. 116-124

[362] *Ibid*.,

[363] In his *Mouṉaguru vaṇakkam*: 4, he says, 'such a body glows like a lighted camphor. Being *cinmaya* (one of pure consciousness of wisdom) it is eternal, liberated and omnipresent'. To him the gross physical body is unreal and stinking.

[364] *Tāyumāṉavar Pātalkaḷ*, *Siddhargaṇam* : 1-10. All these ten stanzas end with a refrain, 'Oh! The group of Siddhas, who have reconciled the *Vēdānta* and the *Siddhānta'*, See R.Venkataraman, *Op.cit*., p. 168

Godhead! How shall I reckon those "Blessed Ones" who have attained, by Thine Grace, to the threefold Perfection while in this human-form residing!" And, in his *Mouṉa Guru Vaṇakkam*, he paid homage to his *Guru* and also defines the Siddhas[365].

Tāyumāṉavar was of the firm conviction that the Siddhas were a rare class of accomplished *yōgi*ns, endowed with enormous powers of unusual nature. He frequently mentions that the Siddhas dissolved the differences between the monistic *Vēdānta* and the pluralistic *Śaiva Siddhānta* and established compromise between the two systems. In his anthology of poems on theology and metaphysics, there are ten songs under the title *Siddhar-gaṇam* which means the galaxy of the Siddhas[366]. In these ten lengthy poems, he addresses them at the end with the refrain, *"vēdānta siddhāntā samarasanaṉ ṉilaipeṟṟa vittaka Siddhar gaṇamē"* which means 'The Siddhas always maintained the venerable way of unifying different layers of thoughts and their advaita or oneness is deemed to be unique'. Further he says that, the Siddhas are capable of travelling all the directions and even beyond them at the speed of mind. They resemble Mount Mēru in their caliber. They shine like *Cakra-pāṇi* (Viṣṇu), visiting the gold-hued *Mahāmēru* and the pole star. They are competent to consume the whole of seven seas. They are strong enough to hold the celestial world on the one hand and the Airāvata, the white elephant and Indra's mount, on the other as if they were balls and play with them. They can reduce the whole space into mustard seed, exhibiting the eight-fold great mountains[367].

They bring down the good shade of the ever growing celestial *kalpaka*-tree swarmed by the humming beetles on the earth. They make the beggars become crowned monarchs. They can transmute the brick into invaluable gold, and so on. Tāyumāṉavar refers to the primal power as Gauri (the consort of Śiva) and *Kuṇḍaliyāyi*, i.e., the mother *kuṇḍalini-śakti* whose grace is indispensable in getting the ambrosia of moon (*sahasrāra*). He did not like to subscribe to the routine life of the mortars, marked by eating and sleeping. He aspired for the time to go beyond this everyday life. Further, he continues to pay glowing tributes to the Siddhas and

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365 S.A. Sarma, *Op.cit*., p. 26

366 *Tāyumāṉavar Swāmigaḷ Tiru-p-Pātal Tiraṭṭu,* in Ārumuga Nāvalar (Ed.), (N.A.), Chennai, (N.D.)

367 Similar thoughts are also found in the songs of Pāmbāṭṭi Siddhar; see *Pāmbāṭṭi Siddhar Songs*, Verse.28, in Kōvēndhan, *Op.cit.*, p. 249

addresses them as monarchs, who reigning the land of the eight-limbed yōga (*Aṣṭāṅga-yōga bhūmi*); covered by the dark clouds formed the royal umbrella, and offering cool shade to them. At the back of the mount *Mēru*, they established their *yōga-daṇḍa*, besides raised their banner of victory. He also describes the *Śiva-Rāja-Yōga* of the Siddhas. In the subsequent verse, Tāyumāṉavar entreated the galaxy of Siddhas to make their benign presence before him, so that he could become a silent ascetic (*mouṉi*) controlling his mind and consciousness to practise *Kuṇḍalini-Yōga*, for to consume the nectar which will provide him with deathless life. The personality of the Siddhas is depicted in the ninth verse. Tāyumāṉavar praised them as royal lions of penance (*tava-rāja-siṅgam*) and ascribed some parallels and attributes common to the Siddhas and the lions. And in the tenth verse he beautifully portrayed the polarity of thoughts, shared by the dialecticians who exhibited only their skill in debate. He also appeared for grace to the celebrated group of the Siddhas who reconciled the apparent contradictions, arising out of *Jñāna-kāṇḍa* and. *Karma-kāṇḍa* on the one hand, *Vēdānta* and *Siddhānta* on the other[368].

Thus, as the philosopher Tāyumāṉavar is held in great esteem by the followers of the pantheistical school, and the doctrines which he held respecting God and the universe may be summed up in the following lines of Pope:

All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body Nature is, and God the soul;
Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees,
Lives through all life, extends through all extent,
Spreads undivided, operates unspent.

As a poet, he certainly claims an undisputed pre-eminence over all his contemporaries. His spiritual songs, of which a collection consisting of 1453 stanzas of various meters was published at Madras in 1836, afford ample proof of his superior talents[369].

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[368] S.N. Kandaswamy, *Op.cit*., pp. 31-34

[369] Simon Casie Chitty, *Op.cit*., p. 112

Siddhar Rāmaliṅgam (1823-1874 C.E.)

Rāmaliṅga Adigaḷ is also popularly known as 'Tiru Aruṭprakāsa Vaḷḷalār' or shortly as 'Vaḷḷalār', which literally means philantrophist, most liberal or benevolent person. Rāmaliṅga adigaḷ was born in Marudūr (near Chidambaram) on Sunday the 5th October 1823, to Rāmaiah Piḷḷai and Chiṉṉammaiyār. When he was a child of six months, he lost his father. Then, their family settled at Karuṅkuḻi, a suburb of Chennai. His elder brother was looking after the family. Rāmaliṅga was put to school at the age of five years. At that tiny age, he had written poems on Lord Muruga. He didn't attend the school; instead he was always engaged in reciting the poems written by him, in ecstasy, at the famous Muruga<u>n</u> temple of Kandakkoṭṭam. He used to sit alone separately in a separate room and one day when he was nine years old, he had the *darśan* of eternal light (*Arutjōthi*). In 1835, at the age of 12 years, he started giving discourses to the enthralled audience[370]. Though he was unwilling, his elders performed his marriage at his 21st year. He didn't have normal married life. In 1867, an anthology of his works was published by his disciple, with his consent under the name '*Tiru aruṭpā tirumuṛai*' (Divine songs of grace) or simply '*Aruṭpā*'[371].

His *Tiruvaruṭpā* is a collection of nearly 7000 poems written in clear and mellifluous Tamiḻ. The text is divided into six books, only five of which were published during his lifetime. The early poems are confessional and devotional; the later ones deeply mystical. A number of them give accounts of his personal practice and experience.This work remains as a shining monument of his religious devotion, spiritual insight and poetical skill[372].

Rāmaliṅgar claimed to come in the line of Siddhas[373] with the aim of transcending all barriers like caste and religion and to experience the Ultimate Reality[374]. He was a saint, Siddha, mystic and poet-all rolled into one. He lead the life of an ascetic, wrapped his body with white cloth. In one of his hymns he refers to

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370 For more details, see Peter Heehs, *Indian Religions*, p. 416

371 V.R. Ramachandra Dikshitar, *Op.cit*., pp. 116-124

372 *Ibid*.,

373 T.P. Meenakshisundaran, *History of Tamil Literature*, Annamalai University, Annamalai Nagar, 1965, p. 165.

374 S.P. Annamalai, *The Life and Teachings of Saint Ramalingar*, p. 1.

Śiva-śakti who graciously bestowed in him all the powers of attainments. In another poem, he has mentioned that the eternal cosmic Dancer offered him all the *siddhis*. He also addressed Śiva to be the crest jewel (diadem) and chief among the Siddhas. Śiva was an expert in performing all miracles and wonders. He named the spiritual spot *siddhi-vaḷāgam* and *Siddhi-puram*, where he spent his last period in deep meditation and absorption.

Like Tirumūlar and the other Siddhas, Vaḷḷalār aspired to attain deathless life which he professed to have achieved due to the Divine Grace. He preached a fresh type of four-fold *puruṣārthas* viz., *ēma-siddhi* - the rare achievement providing oneself with protection; *Sāgā kalvi* - denotes the training in the processes of *Yōga* to attain immortality; *kaḍavuḷ-nilai aṛintal* - the realization of God and becoming one with Him; and *tattuva nigraham*, the control over the *tattvas* of *māyā*, by transcending them, as against the traditional fourfold objectives viz., *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *mōkṣa*. It seems that Vaḷḷalār's concept of *puruṣārtha* is peculiar to the Siddha school of thought. The conquest over the *tattvas* is the primary requisite, leading to the grand life of immortality which in the words of Vaḷḷalār is named *maraṇamilā peruvāḻvu*. Many anecdotes and episodes are recorded in his biography to prove his *yōgi*c attainments and wonder-working powers. It is said that once his devoted servant maid used to keep in his room a wide oil lamp and an earthen vessel, filled with water instead of oil felicitating him to continue his writing work in the night. The next day, when the pious maid returned to serve, she wondered that the water lamp was burning throughout the night[375].

His *Mantra*

Often he cared for all the people including those leading household life. For their welfare and perfect health, he prescribed manifold medicines prepared from the herbs, roots, nuts, buds, fruits, greens and other products of nature, fulfilling the requirements of a Siddha physician. He firmly believed in the *Sāhākkalai* means the art of deathlessness or immortality of the Siddhas, which he elaborately described in *Aruṭperuñjōthi*, the sixth book of his *Tiruvaruṭpā*. He insisted on practising yōga for attaining spiritual realization, supernatural powers and embodied immortality.

[375] S.N. Kandaswamy, *Op.cit*., pp.35-37

Interesting claims are made about the influence of Sūfism on Rāmaliṅgar[376]. The great mantra expounded by this Siddha Rāmaliṅgam is "*Aruṭperuñjyōthi, Taṉipperuṅkarunai! Aruṭperuñjyōthi, Aruṭperuñjyōthi!*" which means, Praise be to the Exalted Grace Divine! Praise be to the Unique-most Divine Compassion! Praise the Exalted Grace Divine!

His Formula of Revitalization

The Tamiḻ Siddha School of therapeutics is mainly distinguished by its threefold approach to the cure and remedy of the ills that afflict humanity: *maṇi*, *mantra* and *auṣadha*. They are the three features that characterize the work and teachings of the true Tamiḻ Siddhas and distinguish them from their counterparts, the Nātha Siddhas. *Maṇi* refers to the alchemical processing of mercury into a solidified bead, capable of achieving the desired alchemical results. *Mantra* is the Word of Power that is capable of performing the Act of Truth. *Auṣadha* is the healing of afflictions by the use of special herbals recognized as *mahauṣadhis* or *mahāmūlikas*. Alchemical writings such as *Āṉandakāṇḍam* specify certain of these special *auṣadhis* or *mahāmūlikas* as well as special *maṇis*.

A recipe for rejuvenation is prescribed in his *Tiruvaruṭpā*,[377] The recipe is made up of four varieties of lotuses: *Senthāmarai* (red lotus) and the *Veṇthāmara* (white lotus), the *Ākāsa Thāmarai* (the Skyward looking one); and *Kal Thāmarai* (stone lotus), found in the dry creeks in the surrounding hills of Rājapāḷayam in the far south.

His Teachings

He firmly believed that it is the hunger which lead the people to do unwanted things as often quoted in Tamiḻ '*Pasi vandidāp pattum parundu pōgum*'. Therefore, he started *Samarasa Śuddha Saṇmārga Satya Saṅgam* and a *Dharmaśāla* in 1867, at Vadalūr and provided for the needy and the orphans in his boarding house. Through this *Dharmaśāla,* he converted thousands of persons into vegetarianism. Like

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[376] See R. Venkataraman, *Op.cit*., p. 169

[377] *Porpaṅgayatthin podunaravauñj suddha jatamum pugalkindra; Verpandaramā madimaduvum vilaṅgum pasuvin tim(b) pālum; Narpañjagamum onrai kalandhu maraṇa narai tirkum kodutthāi; Ninthranakku kaimāru edu koduppene*! See S.A. Sarma, *op.cit*, p.101

Tirumūlar who identifies *Aṉbu* with Śiva[378], he also advocates *aṉbu* (love) which transforms all human undertakings into a good life. It is in this sense that Siddhar Rāmaliṅgam composed his famous song on *Aṉbu*:

Thou of Himalayan vastness,
And yet how soon *Aṉbu* engulfs Thy Form;
Immortal Lord of all gods,
And yet how meekly dost Thou enter the *kudil* of *Aṉbu*,
O Primordial Substance,
And yet *Aṉbu* so enmeshes Thee in its folds;
O Nectar of Immortality,
How lightly dost Thou rest in *Aṉbu's* Palm.
Ocean of Mercy as Thou art,
Yet so contained in *Aṉbu's* crucible,
O Light that illumines all life and logos,
How mysteriously *Aṉbu* enshrines Thee;
O Most High God! Verily Thou art *Aṉbu* embodied! [379]

Further, he recommended four-fold behaviors, being accessories to spiritual perfection of a person such as *Indriya-oḻukkam*, denotes taming of the five-fold motor organs and sense-organs; *Kāraṇa-oḻukkam*, says about to purification of the four-fold internal instruments like *maṉas* (mind), *buddhi* (intellect), *ahaṅkāra* (ego) and *citta* (consciousness); *Jīva-oḻukkam*, denotes the maintaining of harmonious relationship with other human beings of the soceity without any discrimination; and the *Ānma-oḻukkam*, denotes the sympathy and affection towards all other living beings including animals and plants. Vaḷḷalār felt the necessity of ethical preparation for becoming divine. His *Siddha-mārga* enabled his personality to undergo three related types of transformations, essential for earning everlasting existence, such as *Śuddha-dēha*, *Praṇava-dēha* and *Jñāna-dēha*[380].

But, His own teachings once brought *Rāmaliṅga* into conflict with the priestly establishment. His enemies circulated pamphlets against him to court on a trumped-up charge. His disciples began to make extravagant claims about his powers and, against his wishes, to worship him as a deity. Eventually he closed the *Jñāna Sabai* and devoted himself exclusively to his own *sādhana*. In his last sermon, delivered in January 1894, he said: "Friends, I opened a shop but there was none to purchase; so I

[378]*Aṉbum Śivanum irandenbar aṛivilār;Aṉbē Śivamāvadevarum aṛigilār;*
Aṉbē Śivamāvadum Aṛindapin; Aṉbē Śivamai Amardirundārē. Tirumantiram Verse. 257, p.112

[379]Translated by S.A. Sarma, *Op.cit*., p. 100

[380] S.N. Kandaswamy, *Op.cit.*, p.38

have closed it. I will not be visible to your eyes for a certain period, although I will be universally present in the world... Worship God in the form of light and attain salvation".

The end of the life of Rāmaliṅga is interesting. We already referred to his building a temple at Vadalūr. Into a certain chamber in a cottage in the village of Mēttukkuppam, near Vadalūr, Rāmaliṅga retired for contemplation. On Thursday 30th January, 1874, when he completed his fifty years of age, he entered his room and told his disciple to lock the door from outside. When the door was opened a few days later, it was found that his body had disappeared. His disciples believed that he had performed the *siddhi* of dematerialisation. At that time he was fifty-one years old[381].

Śri Ramaṇa *Mahariṣi* (1879-1950 C.E.)

Śri Ramaṇa *Mahariṣi's* real name was Veṅkatarāman. He was born in 1879. His father died when he was twelve, and he and his family went to Madurai, where he continued his education. Though he lost interest in his studies, he enjoyed reading the hagiography that tells the stories of Appar, Sundarar and other Śaiva saints. He also read the Bible (he was attending an American mission school) and bits of the Siddha-inspired poetry of Tāyumāṉavar, as well as the *Tēvāram*. He began meditating, spending most of his time at a Śiva temple. Then, when he was sixteen, he had an unexpected experience[382]. One day, for no particular reason, he became convinced he was going to die. Instead of abandoning himself to his fear, he lay down and considered the fact of death. That which died, he realized, was the body, but the body was not the "I". Continuing his self-inquiry, he saw that *"I"*, which did not die, was the one transcendent Spirit. This self-realisation, which came to him as a direct intuitive perception and not as the result of logical analysis, never left him for the rest of his life[383]. He became absorbed in all contemplation of the deathless Spirit which he was. He took no interest in his body, which soon was covered with insect-bites. He

[381] *Ibid*.,p.35; For more details, see Peter Heehs, *Op.cit*., pp.416-417; see also S.A.Sarma, *Op.cit*.,p. 100

[382]Madhu Bazaz Wangu, *World Religions: Hinduism*, Vol. 6, Viva Books Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 2008 (rep), pp.116,118.

[383] See also T.V. Kapali Sastry, *The Maharishi*, Sri Ramaṇāśraman, Tiruvaṇṇāmalai, 1996, pp.21-23

ate only a part of the food that people brought for him to eat, and, being disinclined to speak, said nothing[384].

Many spiritual teachers of 19th and 20th century India expressed themselves in ways that declare their modernity. Śri Ramaṇa *Mahariṣi* was one of the 20th century Siddhas. When one reads the talks of Ramaṇa *Mahariṣi*, one can easily forget that they were spoken by a particular individual; a man born in southern Tamiḻnādu in a family of Śaiva Brāhmins at the end of the 19th century; rather they seem to come from a timeless spiritual consciousness, which expresses itself here in the Sanskrit of the *Upaniṣāds* and there in contemporary Tamiḻ or Telugu. Śri Ramaṇa came to be called *Mahariṣi*, meaning "great ascetic". The appellation 'Ramaṇa' was given by Śri Vasiśtha Gaṇapati Muṉi[385] alias Śri Kāvyakaṇta Gaṇapati Muṉi. He was considered as the foremost disciple of Śri Ramaṇa, who proclaimed Śri Ramaṇa as '*Bhagavāṉ Śri Ramaṇa Mahariṣi*' in 1907[386].

Including *Bhagavāṉ* Śri Ramaṇa, many of the scholars say and believe that Siddhas are still alive, around the hills of Tiruvaṇṇāmalai. Śri Ramaṇa himself wandered in the forest of the Tiruvaṇṇāmalai in search of the Siddhas. According to *purāṇa* there was a seat of the Siddha Aruṇagiri, who resides in the heart of the hill. For instance, when he was on the hill, Ramaṇa used to take few devotees with him for the *Giri-valam* (going round the hill). This used to last from 9 p.m. to 4 a.m. Once while he was going with his devotees/followers, he pointed his face towards the sky and said: "Look, there perhaps are the Siddhas. They (people) say they are *naksatras* (stars) and pass them by!" Further, he walked on; he observed that the very stars were beneath his feet[387]. While defining the Siddhas, Ramaṇa says that, "The effort of humanity from time immemorial has been to discover the eternal Joy (*Chit* and *Āṉanda*, Knowledge and Bliss) and this has been termed *Tapasya*. The result of such an effort is not the attainment of something new but only fitting the vehicle so as to be overtaken by the ever-present Grace and be in It, and then to find that there is nothing

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[384] Peter Heehs, *Op.cit*., p. 475

[385] T.V. Kapali Sastry, *Op.cit*., p.22

[386] T.K. Sundaresa Iyer, *At the Feet of Bhagavan*, Sri Ramaṇāśramam, Tiruvaṇṇāmalai, 1996, p.88; T.K. Sundaresa Iyer, one of his disciples states that 'Sri Ramaṇa *Mahariṣi* was an incarnation of Lord Subramaṇya'. *Ibid*. p. 98

[387] T.V. Kapali Sastry, *Op.cit*., pp.82 -89

but It. Wherever there is a perfect vehicle the overtaking and the expression of Grace are immediate and perfect, and such a one is termed *Mahariṣi*, *siddha*, *Jīvan̲-Mukta* and so on"[388].

People who visited Śri Ramaṇa used to discuss with Him the several aspects of spiritual life and also the attainment of psychic and magical powers (*siddhi*). But he used to say that "we are all Siddhas, because it is only after very great efforts and penances that we achieved this bodily existence. The purpose of this wonderful attainment is to achieve the greatest of all attainments, i.e., the pure Existence-knowledge Bliss. In the view of a *jñāni*, these powers are no more real than those gained in a dream". According to him *Siddhi* means "one must do to drop the ego-sense. This is the practice (*sādhana*) and this is perfection (*siddhi*) too"[389].To illustrate this principle, Śri Ramaṇa used to quote the story in the *Prabhuliṅga Līla* of a great Siddha Gōrakṣnāth. After very great efforts of various kinds, Gōrakṣnāth had perfected his physical body that it would not die even for a thousand years. He put his body to various tests, and it stood them all well, even it never be cut or pierced by the sword.

Who am I?

The *Mahariṣi's* first works are transcripts of verbal exchanges he had with people who came to him during his early years in Tiruvaṇṇāmalai. *Nān̲ yār*? (Who Am I), a series of twenty-eight questions and answers, dates from the period around 1902, and remains one of his best-known works. In his replies, he presented the method of self-enquiry, which is the basis of his spiritual teaching[390]. Who am I? – This is a basic question of spiritual life. Sages and mystics of all religions accompany the seekers in pursuing this question. This quest takes one to the deeper realms of self-understanding (*ātmabōdha*). Ultimately all spiritual paths point to the realization of the divine dimension of our being[391].

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388 T.K. Sundaresa Iyer, *Op.cit*., pp.77-78

389 *Ibid*., p.74

390 Peter Heehs, *Op.cit*., p. 477

391 S. Painadath, *The Power of Silence*,Indian Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, Delhi, 2011, p. 134

I am the Self (*ātman*). I am Being-Consciousness. Being is my nature. I am the Self-aware Witness-Consciousness. I have no identity with the three states – waking, dream and sleep; they pass and re-pass in my presence. I am the knower of reality; I have my identity with the Divine. To me death means only identifying the self with the non-self. This is intoxication and this intoxication is Death. The discrimination which removes this intoxication is Immortality. This Immortality is not obtained after prolonged penance and at some distant point of time. It is obtained *here* and *now*. As a result of this discrimination I steady myself to enquire who I am. After this enquiry, as instructed by Benign *Guru*, I find the 'I' to be the real substratum, the Self ever aware. All this enquiry is only on the path, for the Final Goal is the Supreme wholeness, into which there is nothing to enquire. I am the Final Goal of the path. The reality that 'I AM' appears to be hidden by confusion and a veil. But by the Grace of the *Guru*, I being fixed firmly in my own reality, the veils have fallen away, both inside and out; so I am the One Indivisible, the *Tūriya* (Fourth State). Yet though it be termed the "fourth" with reference to the changing three states, yet this "fourth" is the substratum and the primal state of Being. When this "fourth" is in contact with the Guru's real nature, then is established Being, and then is the One Whole[392].

Since then it is this Supreme and Real Self within that has taken charge of the personal self and outer being, of the mental activities, of his very bodily movements. "My *Sādhana*! The whole work was finished in twenty minutes, in less than half an hour", said *Mahariṣi*. Hence he lays stress upon this *Sādhana* of searching for the self within one's own being, in the heart and often mentions this as the direct method and as superior to other *Vedāntic Sādhanas* such as 'I am He', I am Brahman', 'All is Brahman', 'All this is not self' *nēti nēti*, etc., etc., Go deep to find They Self that is the real 'I'; everything else can wait. Other problems can be solved afterwards if they arise," is often his exhortation.

Ramaṇa *Mahariṣi* taught mainly by silence. People would come to him with questions in their heads or anguish in their hearts. After sitting before him, they would feel their questions vanish and their anguish disappear. Whenever he replied, instead of giving a satisfactory answer, he undermined the question by forcing his visitors to ask themselves that "Who am I?" During his later years, his talks became more

[392] T.K. Sundaresa Iyer, *Op.cit*., pp.74-76

extensive, and some were noted down by disciples like T. K. Sundaresa Iyer, Kapali Sastry etc. and were published. These talks form the bulk of his teachings. His *Complete Works*, which includes his writings and translations, comprises nearly three hundred pages. Though he was not interested in philosophy and scripture, sometimes he went through books brought by others to him. Prompted by disciples, he made a number of translations of Sanskrit texts into Tami<u>l</u>; he also wrote a few short works in Tami<u>l</u> prose and poetry, along with the occasional poem in Telugu and Malayalam[393].

After living for many years in shrines or in caves, the *Mahariṣi* settled at a place at the foot of Aruṇāchala where his mother, who had joined him, had been buried. A *āśram* gradually developed here and, as he became well known in India and abroad, hundreds of aspirants came to see him. He always remained accessible for part of the day to his disciples as well as visitors. Though he denied he was anyone's *guru*, he took seriously the spiritual and even the material welfare of those who came to him. In 1949, the *Mahariṣi* developed a tumour on his arm. After permitting an unsuccessful operation, he told those concerned about his health: "There is no cause for alarm. The body itself is a disease. Let it have its natural end". He left his mortal body peacefully in April 1950.

Five stanzas on the One Self

When, forgetting the Self, one thinks
That the body is oneself and goes
Through innumerable births
And in the end remembers and becomes

The Self, know this is only like
Awaking from a dream wherein
One has wandered over all the world.

One ever is the Self. To ask oneself
"Who and whereabouts am I?
Is like the drunken man's enquiring
"Who am I?" and "Where am I?"

The body is within the Self. And yet
One thinks one is inside the inert body,
Like some spectator who supposes
That the screen on which the film is thrown
Is within the picture.

Does an ornament of gold exist
Apart from the gold? Can the body exist
Apart from the Self?

[393] Peter Heehs, *Op.cit*., p. 476

The ignorant one thinks "I am the body";
The enlightened knows "I am the Self".

The Self alone, the Sole Reality, Exists for ever.
If of yore the First of Teachers
Revealed it through unbroken silence
Say who can reveal it in spoken words? [394]

Subramaṇiya Bhārathi (1882-1921 C.E.)

C. Subramaṇiya Bhārathi, a Brahmin by caste, was born on December 11, 1882, at Eṭṭaiyapuṛam in Tirunelveli District of Southern Tamiḻnādu to Mr Chiṉṉasāmy and Mrs. Lakśmi[395]. Though he was poor in his studies at school, Bhārathi became a literary prodigy during later years. He settled in Chennai in 1904 and worked as a translator and journalist. When South India was untouched by the cultural and political nationalism of the North, Bhārathi and his associates got in touch with the leaders of the Nationalist Party and promoted their views in Tamiḻ Newspapers. The patriotic poems that Bhārathi published at this time were soon on the tongue of every Tamilian[396]. As his poems kindled the spirit of nationalism among the people, he was suffered by the oppression of the British. Therefore, he came to Puduchērry in September 1908, to escape from the arrest by the British, and stayed there for a decade and left Puduchērry in November 1918[397]. Bhārathi returned to British India from Puduchērry in 1919. Like Swāmi Vivēkānanda, Bhārathi also could not last long and died young in 1921, as he was attacked by a temple elephant at Triplicane in Chennai.

During his brief life span, Bhārathi transformed the Tamiḻ language, long hobbled by academic conventionalism, into a powerful means of popular expression, which he used to give voice to his patriotic, social, literary and mystical interests[398]. While mentioning about him, M. Arunachalam says that "the one poet who forged a link between the past and the present and between the present and the future, who excelled in prose as well as in poetry, and who exploited journalism to a higher

[394] These songs are the last poetic composition which contains the same teachings as those he gave his earliest disciples. Primarily it was written in Telugu by Śri Ramaṇa at the request of a devotee and later translated into Tamiḻ. The above verses translated into English by K. Swaminathan. Quoted in Peter Heehs, *Op.cit*., p. 489

[395] A. Ramasamy, *History of Pondicherry*, Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1986, p. 216

[396] Peter Heehs (ed.), *Op.cit*., pp. 593-594

[397] A. Ramasamy, *Op.cit.*, p. 216

[398] Peter Heehs (ed.), *Op.cit.*, pp. 593-594

literary purpose with considerable success, was Subramaṇiya Bhārathi. The rise of this genius synchronized with the freedom fight, and in him we have perhaps the greatest national poet for all time. The passing of years will only heighten the value of his poetry; even after nationalism dies, a major portion of his poetry will live as a cherished literary legacy of the Tamils. He was a prolific writer; poetry, prose, short story, political criticism, social reform, devotional writing, and philosophical exposition flowed from his pen freely"[399].

Subramaṇiya Bhārathi's works can be grouped under three categories: a) nationalistic poems, b) the stray occasional verses, and c) mini-epics. His *New Āttisūdi* is a short work on the lines of Avvai's poem, written with the stinging patriotism of a revolutionary fighter. During his stay in Puduchērry, Bhārathi composed the famous song '*Enṛu Taṉiyum Intha Suthantira Tāgam*'. The epics *Kuil Pāṭṭu*, *Kaṇṇan Pāttu*, and *Pāñchāli Sabatham* and several poems like '*Suthantira Perumai'*, '*Suthantira Dēviyin Tuti*', and *Suthantira Paḷḷu* were also written by him at Puduchērry. He also wrote verses in praise of 'Siddhānāntha Sāmy temple' and Maṇakuḷa Viṉāyaka Temple in Puduchērry[400].

Tāntric **Elements in the Songs of Bhārathi**

One can find *Tāntric* elements in the songs of Bhārathi like *Śakti* worship, *yōgic* ideas and other spiritual things which are connected with the Siddhas. Like the traditional Tamil̲ Siddhas, Bhārathi also insisted on the worship of Mother-goddess in the name of *Śakti* which is common to all Siddha fraternity. He addresses this *Śakti* as *En Maśatti* (My Own Excellent Power), a term that so endearingly identifies Bhārathi with the very *Śakti*. He also calls her as *Vaiyattadevī* (the Beloved of the Universe)[401]. His primary literary influence remained the Tamil̲ classics and also the poetry of the Tamil̲ Siddhas. Zvelebil rightly points out that "not only the form and language of some of his songs, but to a great extent the imagery and the content is derived directly from Siddha poetry"[402]. Bhārathi like to speak of himself as a Siddha and he tried to

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399 M. Arunachalam, *An Introduction to the History of Tamil Literature*, Gandhi Vidyalayam, Tiruchitrambalam, 1974, p. 323

400 A. Ramasamy, *Op.cit.*, p. 216

401 S.A. Sarma, *Op.cit.*, p. 69

402 Kamil V. Zvelebil, *The Poets*, p.121

imitate the style of Tāyumāṉavar, whose poems are found in the style and ideas of the Siddhas.

His Poems on the Literary Style of the Siddhas

The poems of the Siddhas reflect a warm and positive attitude to the world and life. In that way Subramaṇiya Bhārathi also treated every person as the king of the country, he felt divinity in every atom of the soil and in every man and woman, he realized God in his ordinary life, in his friends, in his teachers and masters and even in his servants and sang those things in his *Kaṇṇan Pāṭṭu*[403]. The Siddhas always wrote for the ordinary folk, and had a strong preference for the people's language or in colloquial, though the subject matter may be beyond ordinary comprehension. Highly impressed by Siddha ideology and poetry, Bhārathi consciously employed Siddha folk meters and colloquialism in his poetry. He often used the *cintu*[404] meter in his songs with alacrity and got undoubted success[405].

The songs addressed to Kaṇṇammā by A̱luguṇi Siddha[406], also inspired Bhārathi to compose his famous *Kaṇṇamma* songs. Siddha Pāmbāṭṭi is famous for his songs in *Cintu* meter and Siddha Kaduveli is famous for his *āṉanta kaḷippu* kind of meter. Tāyumāṉavar and others sung in a folk metre known as *Kilik-Kanni*. Bhārathi himself has sung one piece on those lines[407]. Rāmaliṅga Siddha composed his verses in the ordinary rhythm of respectable colloquial speech[408]. Bhārathi imitated the songs of Rāmaliṅga after understanding the rhythm and the secret of the poetic communion

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[403] Subramanya Bhārathi, *Kaṇṇan Pāttu*,

[404] *Cintu* is probably the most widespread musical form in Tamil folk literature. Many songs connected with rituals among the Tamils are in this meter. See also K.Kailasapathy, *On Bhārathi*, New Century Book House Pvt. Ltd, Madras, 1987, pp. 52-55

[405] Therefore Bhārathidasan (1891-1964), the foremost disciple of Bhārathi and one of the great revolutionary poets of Puduchērry, called Bhārathi 'the father of *Cintu*' meaning that he ushered into mainstream Tamil poetry the *cintu* which has till then largely confined to the sub stream.

[406] A̱luhuṇi Siddha is famous for his songs in lament tone and hence got his name as A̱luguṇi, the mourner. He has written a popular poem with mystical and *Yōgic* ideas, dressed with symbolisms which are difficult to understand. Its popularity is due to its song quality. Conceiving the Supreme Power as *Śakti* and addressing her as Kaṇṇammā, this Siddha unburdens in songs his thoughts and feelings. See A.V. Subramania Aiyar, *Op.cit.*, pp. 70-71

[407] M. Arunachalam, *op.cit.* p. 271

[408] Saint Rāmaliṅga's verses are mostly in *eṇcīr virutham*. He also composed musical compositions such as *Kīrttaṇai*, *kummi* etc. But when he evolved as a great mystic and a great poet, he preferred the rhythm of the common speech rather than the high class literary style. See T. P. Meenakshisundaran, *Papers on Linguistics and Literature*, Annamalai University, Annamalai Nagar, 1965, pp. 80-81; For more details about St. Rāmaliṅga see Peter Heehs (ed.), *Op.cit*, pp. 416-429.

of Rāmaliṅga. Hence, he has written *kīrttaṇais* and also verses in the forms of *cintu*, *kaṇṇi*, *āṉanta kaḷippu, kāvati cintu, paḷḷu*, etc.

Bhārathi's Association with Puduchērry Siddhas

Bhārathi took asylum in Puduchērry in September 1908, stayed there for a decade till November 1918[409]. Due to this association, he learnt many secrets of *yōgic* life and gave some references about Siddhars in his compositions. Bhārathi in one of his songs refers to a Kuḷḷasāmi Siddha also known as Māṅgoṭṭai Sāmi as his '*Guru*' (preceptor) who taught him the secrets of *prāṇāyāma*[410]. Then he tells about Govindasāmy Siddhar as 'Govinda *Jñāni*' and his miracles[411]. It is said that Bhārathi was also initiated through '*Nayaṇa Dīkṣa*' (initiation through his eyes) by Siddha Yāḻpānathu adigal (a Siddhar from Yāḻpānam i.e. Śri Lanka). Besides them, Bhārathi refers to the Puduchērry Siddhars like 'Kadarkari Āṇdi', 'Mouṉa Sāmiyār' and 'Miḷagāi Paḻa Sāmiyār' in his songs. Meanwhile, Bhārathi also came in touch with Śri Aurobindo. He nurtured Bhārathi's interest in the *Vēdas* and other Sanskrit scriptures[412]. To some extent, in his '*sixty-six'* verses[413], Bhārathi declared himself as a Siddhar that 'There were many Siddhars before me; I too am one in their line'[414]. Bhārathi used to sit and sleep in the Siddhānanda Sāmi temple at Karuvadikuppam[415].

His Self-Declaration as a Siddha

In his *Poyyo Meyyo* (True or False), Bhārathi presents a forceful statement of his logically realistic understanding of God, World and the Individual[416]. In the later years, much of his writing was prophetic and far ahead of his times. Bhārathi had the poetic vision of the declaration of Indian Independence long before India got her independence on 15th August 1947, and he sung it in his *sutantira-p-paḷḷu*, as

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[409] A. Ramasamy, *Op.cit.*, p. 216

[410] *Bhārathi Sixty Six*, *Gurukkal Sthuthi* (*Kuḷḷasāmi Pugaḻ*), Verse Nos.19 to 36

[411] *Ibid.,* (*Govindasāmi Pugaḻ*) Verse Nos.37 to 39

[412] For more details about Sri Aurobindo see Peter Heehs (ed.), *Op.cit*, pp. 455-474

[413] *Bhārathi Sixty Six*, (*Mutharḳ Kāṇdam*) Verse No. 1.

[414] Braj Ranjan Mani, *Op.cit.*, p. 162

[415] Very next to this temple is a Mango groove, in which Bhārathi wrote his famous *Kuil Pāṭṭu*, therefore this groove was named a*s Kuil Thōppu.*

[416] S.A. Sarma, *Op.cit.*, p. 67

'*āduvōmē paḷḷu pāduvōmē āṉanda sutantiram adainthu viṭṭōm eṉdṛu*'[417]. For this kind of his prophetic attitude and predicting power, he was classified under the group of mystic poets[418]. However, one step ahead, Bhārathi himself declared as one among the Siddhas. Bhārathi by nature was a *Śākta*. He named himself Śaktidāsaṉ. He invoked the Divine Mother reciting her manifold names such as Mahākāli, Parāśakti, Umā, Bhairavi, Manōnmaṇi, Mahāmāyi, etc., who offered him everything and who avoided him from entering into the dense forest of despair and distress. He stated that because of her immense grace, he was able to compose poems as sweet as honey[419].

Bhārathi, in one of his poetical works entitled '*Bhārathi Sixty-Six*', speaks of the hoary Siddha tradition from which he claimed to have descended. He confesses that it is not he who so composed the verses, but the Divine *Śakti* who illuminate his intelligence and inspires the verses[420]. He declared in his autobiography that 'There were many Siddhas before me; I too am one in their line'[421].

Of the hallowed tradition of the Siddhas am I born-
And now am arrived here in this land!
Many an elder Siddha have I as precursors!-Mind Jewel!
Abiding within verily inspires my verses!
My Own, The Most High! Beloved of the Universe! [422]

He also sung many independent songs on various national leaders, renowned Siddhas like Tāyumāṉava. The following songs are given as a specimen of his versatile fields of interests.

On Tāyumāṉavar

You willed to live forever, A symbol of sweet Tamiḻ.
You are young even today, Deathless like Tamiḻ.
You knew that is utter Bliss. And That is Utter Bliss.
Part of the undying heavens, abide with our transcience too! [423]

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[417] Subramaṇya Bhārathi, Verse No.31, *Sutantira-p-paḷḷu*, Even today we sing this song on our Independence day and national day celebrations.

[418] See Peter Heehs (ed.), *Op.cit*, pp. 593-594

[419] S.N. Kandaswamy, *Op.cit*., p.40

[420] S.A. Sarma, *op.cit.*, p. 67

[421] Braj Ranjan Mani, *Op.cit*., p. 162

[422] *Enakku munnēchittar palarirundārappa;Yānum vandēn oru cittaninda nāṭṭil; Manattinile nindridanai eḻudugindral;Manōnmaṇi, En Māsatti, Vaiyattudēvi*! See *Bhārathi Sixty Six*, (*Muthaṛ Kāṇḍam*) Verse No. 1, English version of this song is quoted in Peter Heehs (ed.), *Op.cit*., p. 595

On Nandalālā

I see your complexion, Nandalālā, in the crow's dark feathers.
I see the divine green, O Nandalālā, in the leaves of all the trees
Tis thy music, Nandalālā, that I hear, in all the sounds of the world
And I thrill with your touch Nandalālā, when my finger feels the flame. [424]

About Joy

The world is charged with sweetness, the sky is sweetly fashioned.
The air is sweet. Fire, water, earth, all is sweet.
The sun is beneficent, the moon is beneficent.
The stats in the sky are wondrous beautiful.
Sweet is rain, lightning, thunder.
Sweet is ocean, mountain, forest, Rivers are joy-giving.
Ore, tree, plant, creeper, Flower, fruit, all give joy.
Bird, insect, animal, all, all good creatures are.
Fishes and the denizens of the deep are good.
Men are very good too.
Male and female are alike good. Childhood is blessed.
Sweet is youth, and age is sweet.
Welcome life, and welcome, death! [425]

His poems also provide us the evidence of the continuity of the Siddha tradition. He advocates the elimination of casteism, liberation of women and proclaims that all citizens are kings of this country (*ellōrum innāṭṭu ma<u>nn</u>ar*). Like many other Siddhars of yore, he too boasts of his latent powers achieved by *yōga* and discipline. To him the Lord of Death is nothing more than a trivial blade of grass. He sung that:

> *The crows and sparrows are our clan.*
> *The seas and hills are our kin.*
> *We behold none but ourselves,*
> *Wherever we turn our eyes.* [426]

Thus, the great national poet of Tamil̲nādu, Subramaṇya Bhārathi inspired by the songs of Siddhas and through his direct contact with the Siddhas of Puduchēry, obtained the latent occult power in him. Bhārathi is also a great Siddha apart from being a poet of the common man. He used the language of the common man in his

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423 *Bhārathi Songs, Ta<u>n</u>i Pātalkaḷ, Tāyumā<u>n</u>var Vāl̲thu,* pp. 256-257, for English version see Peter Heehs (ed.), *Op.cit*., p. 595

424 *Bhārathi Songs, Bhakti Pātalkaḷ, Nandalālā,* No. 48, p. 159; instead of the term *Nandalālā*, Prema Nandakumar used the word 'Kṛṣ́ṇa' in her works. See Peter Heehs (ed.), *Op.cit*., p. 595

425 *Bhārathi Songs, Vasana Kavithai, I<u>n</u>bam*-1. p.452, for English version, Peter Heehs (ed.), *Op.cit*.,p.595

426 *Bhārathi Songs, Jñāna Pātalkaḷ, Jaya Pērikai,* verse 3, p. 197; for English version see *Ibid*., p. 595

works as the language of his poetry. He was well versed in both the elite idiom as well as the language of the folk genre.

Swāmi Siddhāṉanda

Swāmi Siddhāṉanda was born at Vaṇḍipāḷayam village, near Cuddalore. He lost his father in his young age and grown under the care of his mother, who engaged in the business of selling flowers and supplying garlands to the Pātalīśvara temple at Cuddalore. It is said that, in his childhood, he attained the divine powers by the grace of Lord Pātalīśvara. People believed that his words became true. He cured the diseased persons and solved the people's problems and sorrows. Therefore people started calling him as 'Siddhāṉanda Sāmigal'[427]. As days passed, Siddhāṉanda's name, fame and his miraculous powers started to spread all over the neighbouring states. Hearing about him and his powers, one Muthukumarasāmi of Muthialpet, Puduchērry, invited Siddhāṉanda to Puduchērry, to cure his wife, Aṉṉammāl, who was suffering from severe stomach pain. Siddhāṉanda cured her pain. Muthukumarasāmi Piḷḷai offered his garden at Karuvadikuppam to Siddhāṉanda for his stay, (where the present Siddhāṉanda Sāmi's temple is located). It is also said that during his period of stay, Sāmi performed various miracles. He often engaged in performing *Yōga* and meditation. He lived in Puduchērry till his death[428].He performed various miracles for the benefit of the common people. When he reached the age of sixty, he predicted his death and instructed his disciples about his day of attaining *yōga-samādhi* and how to perform the rituals for the *Samādhi*. Thus, on the Tamiḻ month of Vaikāsi 15th (25th May 1837) at the age of his sixty-five, he attained his *Samādhi*. Muthukumarasami constructed in his garden at Karuvadikuppam (in front of the Fathima Hr. Sec. School) the *Samādhi*, a small shrine on the *Samādhi*; established a big mutt, dug a well and constructed a pond to the south of the *Samādhi* shrine. Every year on the death anniversary of Sāmi Siddhāṉanda, the *Gurupūjā* is celebrated in this *Samādhi* shrine with pomp and glory. Meanwhile, in one of his

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427 C.S.Murugesan*, Bhārathi Kaṇda Siddhargal,* Azhagu Pathipagam, Chennai, 2000, pp. 55-83; see also C.S.Murugesan*, Puduchērry Siddhargal,* Shankar Pathipagam, Chennai, 2007, pp. 14-17

428 C.S.Murugesan*, Op.cit*., pp. 55-83

songs, Bhārathi mentions about Sāmi Siddhāṉanda[429]. He is considered as the most celebrated Siddhar in Puduchērry.

Kuḷḷa Sāmi Siddhar

He was so named perhaps because of his dwarf form. Bhārathi adores this Siddha to be his *jñāna-guru-dēśika*, who is also named Māṅkoṭṭai Sāmi[430]. He displayed to Bhārathi the power of *Parāśakti* and the secrets of *siddhis*. The poet pays glowing tributes to his preceptor who is none other than the cosmic Dancer to him. The Siddha actually experienced the ultimate space, transcending the triple *pāḻ* viz., the *māyā* space, the *bodha* space and the *upasānta* space. (*Muppāl* also denotes *jīva*, *Īśvara* and *jagat*. Then, it means that the Siddha crossed the levels of soul, God and world and reached the highest reality). He showed Bhārathi the means of having contact with the celestial sphere, though living on earth.He bestowed Bhārathi the state of calmness. He was actually *Kumāra Dēva*, protected him through *kuppāya-jñāna*[431] removing the chillness of death. He was a distilled *jñāni* who cut asunder the bonds and burnt the fear complex.He bore on his head-crown the Ganges of knowledge. To measure the greatness of such a great Siddha is just to measure the sun by the chain. He made his life immortal through the application of *kāya-kalpa*.

Bhārathi narrated the context of meeting the Siddha Kuḷḷa Sāmi alias Māṅkoṭṭai Sāmi at Puduchērry in the small house of Rājarām Aiyar; a Brahmin migrated from Nāgapaṭṭiṇam, while he was correcting the Tamiḻ translation of some *Upaniṣads*, done by his father. On the arrival of the Siddha, Bhārathi became emotional, charged with piety and commenced to address him in the following way:

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[429] *Siddhāndha Sāmi Tirukkōil Vāiyilil, Dīpa Oli yuṇdām – Penne!*
Muthāndha Vīdhi Muḻuthaiyum Kāṭṭida, Mūnda Thiruchchudarām – Penne!
Uḷḷath thaḻukkum Udalirk kuṛaikalum, ōṭṭavarum Chudarām – Penne!
Kaḷḷath thanangal Anaithum velippadak, Kāṭṭa varum chudarām – Penne!
Thōnṛrum Uyirgal anaithum nan renpathum, Thōṛṛa muruñ jchudarām – Penne!
Mūnṛu vagaippadum Kālanan renpathai, Munna ridum chudarām – Penne!
Pattiṇan thaninulum pākkanan renpathai, Pārka Olichchudarām – Penne!
Kattu manaiyilum kōil nan renpathaik, Kāna Olir Chuddrām – Penne!; -Bhārathi, *Jñāna Pātalkaḷ*, No.14

[430] Māṅkoṭṭai literally means the mango's nut. But, here it denotes symbolically the fruition of *Kuṇḍalini-yōga*, attained by the Siddha. Here it is right to compare the Kudambai Siddhar's song on *māṅkāi-pāl*. See Kudambai Siddhar Songs, Verse 28, p. 271

[431] *Kuppāyam* means jacket or shirt. Just like changing one's shirt, the soul changes its physical body. This wisdom is noted by Bhārathi as *kuppāya- jñānam*.

Oh my Father! Preceptor! There are some people speaking of you a jñāni while others a lunatic. Some others adore that you have accomplished with Aṣṭāṅga-yōga siddhi (eight-fold yōgic attainments). I pray you to reveal your good self without indulging in rhetorics. Who are you? Why do you ramble, wrapped your body with rags and tatters? What is it that you wink like a celestial? Why do you pray with the urchins and dogs in the street? Why do you wander casting the look of Buddha? Why have you assumed the form of Supreme Śiva? Entreat you to kindly reveal your goodself.

Meanwhile, the siddha tried to escape, but Bhārathi cleverly stopped him. Looking around, the Siddha smiled and again wriggled out of his grip and ran to the fields. Bhārathi followed him and caught hold of him. Then, the Siddha taught him the basic principles of *Vēdānta* and also *Vāci-Yōga*. He further instructed him to earn personal experience (*a̱nubhava-jñāna*) which alone would clear all doubts and procure salvation. Bhārathi narrated an interesting anecdote of the Siddha, occurred in a different day. He asked him the reason of carrying on his back a big sack of dust, waste and rags.

The noble Siddha smiled and replied: "*I bear the burden of dust on the outer side of my personality. But you people bear the same in your heart!*". Through examples and precepts, symbolism and expressed language, Kuḷḷa Sāmi, the Siddha taught the poet many a message, elevating the level of his spiritual life[432].

Gōvinda-*Jñāni*

The second Siddha whom Bhārathi met when he lived in Puduchērry was one Gōvinda-*jñāni* alias Gōvinda Sāmi. He was a great *yōgin* and a kind mother to the afflicted beings. To his kindness, even sea could not be a comparison. He discarded delusion of anxiety and worry and experienced the divinity in all beings. One day he showed the form of the dead father of Bhārathi. Likewise, he assumed the form of his dead mother. As a result, Bhārathi came to know that the Siddha Gōvindan was not only a great *yōgin* but also a supreme *jñāni* and mystic. After taking refuge at his holy feet, Bhārathi abandoned the fear of death and attained strength[433].

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[432] S.N. Kandaswamy, *Op.cit*., pp. 41-42

[433] *Ibid*., pp. 42-43

Yāḻpāṇam Kathirvēl Sāmy

Kathirvēl sāmy was a native of Śrilaṅka who came and settled in Puduchērry, near the Pāpammāl temple at Muthiālpēt and waited for the arrival of Rāmaliṅga. At Siddhāṉanda temple he engaged in deep meditation and attained miraculous powers.Then he stayed at the present '*Sithankudi'* area. He taught *Kuṇḍalini yōga* to the poet Bhārathi and also demonstrated it[434]. Bhārathi portrays him as a boat of wisdom (*jñāna tōṇi*) to redeem even the sinners across the ocean of birth. He showered immense grace through his benign eyes on Bhārathi at Puduchērry. Bhārathi firmly believed that total surrender at the feet of the Siddha, thinking him nothing less than Īśvara and Śaṅkara would fetch one all the attainments. When St. Rāmaliṅga visited Puduchērry, he met him and received his blessings. He performed (*Mouṉa Vratha*) silence for eighteen days, in the Siddhāṉanda temple. Then he shifted his hut in the Kandankudi of Brindhāvaṉam area.

Daily he visited and offered worship at the Siddhāṉanda temple and returned to Brindāvaṉam. He offers food and other needful things to the needy people. One day, he gave a one rupee coin, which he produced by converting the coconut shell, to a lady who asked for help. He told her that he will give her daily one rupee only for ten days with a condition that within that period she has to search a job. He also instructed her to utilize the coin only in big shops which have good slaes and not even by mistake in any petty shops. But the lady remained lethargic without searching any job. On the tenth day, she purchased goods in a petty shop. The shop-keeper found a coconut shell in the shape of a coin in his treasure box. Then he enquired the lady, who told him that the coin was offered to her by an ascetic. The shopkeeper thought that the fake ascetic only cheated the lady. Therefore, he took the lady along with other neighbouring merchants and shopkeepers to Kathirvēlsāmy. Understanding the situation, Kathirvēl Sāmy himself burnt his hut and diverted the angry mob to control the fire. But before they could react the hut was completely gutted. The very next day, the shopkeeper saw that the hut remained there as it is without any damage. He realized his mistake and asked for apology. Sāmy laughed at him and gave him a one

[434] Subrahmaniya Bārathi, *Bhārathi Sixty-six*, Verses No.40-41, p. 292

rupee coin to compensate the one rupee that the shopkeeper lost on that day. Then after nothing is known about his last days, or where he went from Puduchērry.

Kuvaḷai Kaṇṇaṉ

The fourth Siddha whom Bhārathi met during his dwelling at Puduchērry was Kuvaḷai Kaṇṇaṉ. Bhārathi praises him to be the Lord of Kailāś, mounted on the bull. Though the Siddha was born in the Brahmin caste, he denounced the caste hierarchy and treated the outcaste and others equally without any discrimination. All the hermits and ascetics were the friends of Kuvaḷai Kaṇṇaṉ, while the celestials were his devotees. He was an undaunted hero. It was he who brought the Siddha of Jaffna to his residence. Bhārathi stated that he decorated his heart with the lotus feet of Kuvaḷai Kaṇṇaṉ, and felt simultaneously the sense of eternal liberation[435].

Other Siddhars of Puduchērry Region

Apart from the above said Siddhas, there are different lists of Siddhas in Puduchērry. The available lists and the legends or the historical facts reveal the continuity of the Siddha tradition in Puduchērry. There are no authentic records or sources available to know about their history. However, based on C.S. Murugesan's work *Puduchērry Siddhargaḷ*, and various lists found in the popular Siddha shrines, and personal interviews conducted by me with the devotees of respective *Siddha-Kśētras*, following information is gathered which is presented here on the chronological basis. (See Appendix 2)

Pavaḻakodi Siddhar

The *samādhi* shrine of Pavaḻakodi Siddhar is located at Sōmbaṭṭu village of Maṇṇādipaṭṭu Commune of Puduchērry. Around 17th century, this Siddha lived in a forest on the way to Virudhāchalam. Due to the efforts of one Dalavāi Reddy of Sōmbaṭṭu village, he came to this village and stayed there. People called him as Pavaḻakodi Siddhar. Since he used such kinds of herbals to cure the diseases, he got that name. It is also said that, there are two villages named Pavaḻakodi and Pavaḻaṅkādu near Virudhāchalam. He made a physically handicapped to walk, cured leprosy, etc. He also had the power of foretelling. He himself announced about his

[435] Subramaniya Bhārathi, *Bhārathi Sixty-six*, Verses No.42-44, 292-3;.S.N. Kandaswamy, *Op.cit.*, p.43

end. One day he informed about his *samādhi* to Dalavāi Reddy. By his instruction, they also constructed the cemetery (*samādhi*) at Sōmbaṭṭu village. More than hundred years, it lost its importance. But very recently, i.e. after 2011, it again got more importance and usual oblations, *gurupūja* on January 16th, etc. are conducted regularly in a grand manner[436].

Śri Nāgaliṅga Sāmy

Śri Nāgaliṅga sāmy was the 10th pontiff of Śri Ambalathādum Iyer *Matha* of Chidambaram. When Mālik Kafur invaded India, particularly South India, Chidambaram was under his threat. Therefore, he took two of his disciples, covered the statue of Māṇickavāsaga, donated by the Pāṇdya ruler, with palm leaf manuscripts and some oblation articles, and packed with silk cloth and carried it in a palanquin like a corpse. They reached Puduchērry via Cuddalore. Since it is procession of dead body, the soldiers left them to move. Meanwhile, Chidambaram was demolished by Mālik Kafur.

At Puduchērry, Nāgaliṅga sāmy stayed in a hut near the sea shore and continued his *matha* works. The palm leaves were kept in a silver casket and pūjas were conducted daily. The fame of Nāgaliṅga Sāmy began to spread in Puduchērry region. He performed many miracles like regaining one's eye sight, speech to a dumb and so on. During his last days, he appointed one of his senior disciples as an eleventh pontiff of the *matha*. After his death, his disciples constructed his *Samādhi* in the *matha* itself and installed a *Śivaliṅga* on it. Every year on the Tamiḻ month of Āṇi, 7th *Gurupūjā* is conducted to him. Even today, daily *pūjās* were conducted to the Silver casket containing the palm leaf manuscripts, and every year on *Mahāśivarātri*, the casket was opened and offered oblations. In his honour, the French Government named this street as Ambalathādum Iyer Madam St. and also often honored the head of this *matha* in all of its public functions[437].

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[436] Due to efforts taken by the villagers with the help of Puduchērry Chief Minister Rangasamy, the *samādhi* shrine was again renovated and oblations were continuing therein of. Interview with K. Purushothamma Reddy, (68), Reddy St. Sōmbaṭṭu village. 16.1. 2012.

[437] C.S.Murugesan, *Puduchērry Siddhargal,* pp. 35-42

Śri Śaktivēl Paramānanda Siddhar

Aruṭguru Śri Śaktivēl Paramānanda Siddhar was the native of Cuddalore. He was born in a rich family. His father was died when he was a child hence protected by his brothers. After his father's death the assets were divided into five shares. His brothers are too concentrated on his assets instead of caring on him. Therefore he divided his assets into four equal divisions and gave to his brothers and then left from his home. From his childhood he was interested in worshipping Dēvi Parāśakti. After visiting many temples, finally he settled near Mudaliārpēt near Puduchērry town. There he started meditating in a coconut grove Dēvi Paraśakti and worshipped her formless image. He also helped the needy through his divine powers, therefore devotees gathered around him. Since he gave blissfulness to all, his real name 'Śaktivēl' was called with the suffix as Śaktivēl Paramānanda Siddhar. One day he informed his close disciples about his *samādhi* and also told them about coming of railway line and a big factory near his mutt in future and thousands of families will be benefited through them. Then he attained his *samādhi* on 23rd of Tamil̲ month Ādi. He was buried at the place he showed. Every year on that day, the *gurupūjā* was celebrated. At present, nearer to his *samādhi* shrine, the Anglo French Textiles and a railway line was constructed. Then after a long period of interval, again from 1998 onwards, with the efforts made by the employees of AFT mills, the *gurupūjā* is celebrated continuously, and also big *maṇḍapa* was constructed very recently (2012) in this *samādhi* shrine. It is said that he was the contemporary of Siddha Rāmaliṅga[438].

Śri Tēṅgāi Sāmigaḷ (Villianūr)

The *Samādhi* of Śri Tēṇgāi Sāmigaḷ is situated at Taṭṭāñchāvady, just opposite to the electricity sub-station of Villianūr, in the northern side of the Villianūr – Puduchērry high ways. It is a small temple –like structure made up of iron sheets in which a *liṅga* is installed. No much information is available about this Siddha. It is believed that he stayed at Ol̲ugarai. When he went to Guruvappa Nāyakan Pāḷayam, he was welcomed by village elite and offered a hut in a paddy field at Maṇaveli Road,

[438] C.S.Murugesan, *Op.cit*, 2007, pp. 155-161; Interview with S. Muthukrishnan, (58), S/o. Subburayan, Vanrapettai, Puduchērry, 12.12.2009.

to continue his spiritual works. When the devotees came to him with troubles, he asked them to break the coconut into two pieces and tell them their fortunes, from the scenes which he saw in the coconut halves. Since he solved the problems with the help of the coconut, people started to call him as 'Tēṅgāi Sāmigaḷ'.

Another story about him is that, every year on the 18th day of Tamil̲ Month Ādi, Sāmy used to break eighteen coconuts on his devotees' head and solved their problem. Thus he got this name. For some years he did herbal treatment to the people. Then he engaged in *yōgic* practices, and attained *samādhi* under a *Bilva* (*beyal*) tree in a groove at Taṭṭāñchāvady. Every month on first Monday special *pūjās* are conducted. For some years it is continued and later discontinued. Then a teacher from Ol̲ugarai started to visit and worship every week. Few years back the damaged hut was renovated with Iron sheets (as it looks today) and made it as a place of worship. Now *Gurupūjā* was celebrated every year. At present (2014), foundation is laid for a concrete building[439].

Śri Rāma Paradēsi (Villianūr)

The Rāma Paradēsi mutt is situated near Perambai road, to the north of Villianūr- Puduchērry high way in Villianūr. Being a Siddha's mutt people did not show much interest on this initially and earlier it was in a small concrete tomb. As a symbol of *Samādhi*, a *Tuḷasi Mādam* was placed in an elevated portico. An image of Rāma Paradēsi was sculpted in a stone slab and an inscription belongs to *Saka* year 1781 (C.E. 1868) found there mentions about him in both Tamil̲ and English languages[440].

1. *Om*
2. *Mahātma*
3. *Rāmaparadēsi*
4. *Swāmiyār*
5. *Samādhi*
6. *Sālivāhana Sakāptham 1791*
7. *TOMB OF*
8. *RAMAPARADAS*
9. *1868*

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439 Interview with Mr. Arumugam, (48), care-taker of the *samādhi* shrine, Taṭṭāñchāvady. See also C.S.Murugesan, *Puduchērry Siddhargal,* pp. 88-90

440 See also G. Vijayavenugopal (ed.), *Inscriptions of Puducherry*, Vol. I, (Villianur Inscription No. 420), French Institute of Indology, Pondicherry, 2006, p. 374. And also see Villianur N. Venkatesan, *Varalātril Villianūr* (Tamil̲), Sekar Pathipakam, Chennai, 2001, p.186.

People tell many stories on him as they like. It is said that, he was a native of Āndhra. He lost his mother in his childhood. Thus he renounced his desires on worldly life. He wandered here and there to take care of his father. After his father's death, he came to Puduchērry by walk and settled in Villianūr. When the villagers saw this young ascetic, they started enquiring like who he was?, where he came from?, and so on. But for all their questions he only answered as 'Rām! Rām!!'. Therefore, people called him as 'Rāma Paradēsi". Villagers made a small hut to him and offered him food on routine basis; due their love he accepted it for once in a day. It is said that once he cured snake bite of a person, then he became more popular for his miracles and power. He foresaw his death, as well as an attack of a big storm in the next month. Therefore, he asked the villagers to shift their houses. But they didn't believe. But in 1840, on one Monday, suddenly heavy rain was started, which led to severe floods. Many villagers died including Rāma Paradēsi. In 1868, the French Government planned to construct a railway line. When they dug the place, they found a body in sitting posture. Then they identified that it was the body of the Rāma Paradēsi, who died here eighteen years back. Then, they shifted the body and buried and a small *samādhi* shrine was constructed. Recently, the villagers of Villianūr built a huge and beautiful *maṇdapa* there. Now it is worshipped as a place for getting peace. Farmers visit this shrine, before starting their agricultural activities[441].

A̲lagappa Siddhar (1800-1840 C.E.)

Thennampākkam village is located to the southwest of Puduchērry near Ēmbalam. This village is famous for its A̲lagu Muthu Iyanār temple and A̲lagar festival. It is a very peaceful place located with tamarind grove. One can witness now a large number of concrete statues in human forms with different kinds. Mostly these statues depict the images of children or different parts of the human body, children with books, etc. Because there prevails a belief in this place that those who are in want of a children, may install a statue of a child, will get a child, those who want better education to their child will install a child with reading a book. Similarly, if anybody found with physical handicap will offer a replica of the parts like leg, hand, eye, etc. All these beliefs are came into vague because of one A̲lagappa Siddhar who

[441] Interview with Mr. Baskar, (62), Perambai village,5.1.2010; C.S.Murugesan*, Op.cit*, 2007,pp.91-99

stayed here. It is said that he cured many diseases and solved the problems of the devotees. Often he had meditated under the well, located nearer to the Iyanār temple. One day he did not come out of meditation and attained *samādhi* inside the well. Then after every year on the Tami̱l month of Cittirai, A̱lagar temple festival is celebrated. The well is decorated and oblations were conducted to it. Due to its divinity, the well is now closed and a cemetery was constructed on its top. One Kumaḷam, K. Rāmānujam wrote some divine songs on A̱lagar Siddhar. It is believed that he lived in between 1800 to 1840 and attained his *samādhi* at the age of his forty[442].

Akkā Paradēsi Sāmy (d. 1872 C.E.)

Akkā-paradēsi-sāmy became a staunch devotee of Lord Vi̱nāyaka at his very young age. He made an idol of Vi̱nāyaka in clay and worshipped it. One day a woman also worshipped the idol. Due to his extreme bliss, he kissed in her hands. But she scolded the boy. Then after, started calling all the women as '*Akkā'*, means elder sister. Therefore, he was named as Akkāparadēsi Sāmy. After sometime he worked as a policeman at Ginjee. But not interested in his work, again he returned to Puduchērry. To him one Nārāyaṇa paradēsi became the disciple who often begged food for him. It is also said that he meanwhile went to Śrilaṅka and performed some miracles, then returned to Puduchērry; he gave vision to the blind; punished two prostitute women who misbehaved with him and so on. Finally, he attained his *samādhi* on June 1872. A *samādhi* shrine known as *Akkā Sāmy Siddhar Pītam* was constructed at Vā̱laikuḷam of Puduchērry. The street also bears the same name, named after him. In that shrine, the clay Vi̱nāyakar made by the Akkāparadēsi, and a grinding stone which he used for making herbal medicines are also kept in his memory[443].

Śri Dakśiṇāmūrthy Sāmigaḷ (d. 1909 C.E.)

The *samādhi* of Śri Dakśiṇāmūrthy Sāmigaḷ is located at Thennal village, on the Vi̱lupuram-Puduchērry highways. To the left of his *samādhi*, an Iyanār temple and a pond is exists. The idol of Śri Dakśiṇāmūrthy Sāmigaḷ is installed on an elevated

[442] Interview with S. Sethuraman Nāidu, (61), Embalam village; see C.S.Murugesan*, Op.cit*, 2007, pp.146-149.

[443] Interview with Mr. Arumugam and Calaiarassy (58), Akka Samy Madam St., (7.7. 2011); C.S.Murugesan*, Op.cit*, 2007, pp. 67-84.

portion of the *samādhi*. One Varadharāja Counder of this village was found too closer as a disciple to this Siddhar. He was protected by one Lakśmi Nārāyaṇa Reddy of Thennal village. After performing many miracles he attained *samādhi* on 07.07.1909. Every year on this day, his *Gurupūjā* is celebrated with pomp and glory by these villagers. At present, a foundation is laid for constructing a big concrete building in front of this *samādhi*. Besides, one of his disciples V. Kanaka Periyasāmy Nāyakkar of Arumpārthapuram wrote a dozen of songs on him[444].

Śri Lakśmaṇa Sāmigaḷ (d. 1947 C.E.)

This Siddha often wandered in the roads of Mīṉāchipēt in Puduchērry. Nothing is known about his early life. He spoke Telugu mixed Tamiḻ. He often did small works in the houses of Mīṉāchipēt and stayed in the Amman temple during night times. He went on fasting during these times. People believed that he often spoke with Goddess Ambika. Therefore, local women approached him and told their problems for getting remedies. As a result, mob gathered during times in the temples. Understanding its harmfulness, he stopped staying there at night and migrated to Puduchērry big market and worked as a load-man in the market.

One day, on a peak hour in business, Sāmy appeared as too sad and sat in the middle of the road under hot sun. Drivers, police and others tried a lot to remove him but they failed. Thus, traffic was diverted. Meanwhile, people started worshipping him. On the fourth day, there started heavy rain with lightning and thunder. But still he sat there without any movement for eighteen days. When he woke up, he looked at all and laughed. Somebody feared at him that he was a mad and somebody worshipped him as a Siddha. Too many changes found in him. He migrated to Muthiālpēt and stayed there. People looked him as a god. Merchants treated him respectfully in their shops. But he ever stayed permanently. A Shopkeeper offer him one snuff strip and continue his business. In that shop, Sāmy took one 1 rupee coin and threw it away. The whole day there was a good business in that shop. On another day, in a shop, Sāmy tried to take the coin from the cash box. But the shop owner slapped him. Thus Sāmy walked silently towards north from Muthiālpēt to

[444] Interview with Pulavar Kalamegam, (77), Thennal Village, 29.11.2010; C.S.Murugesan, *Op.cit*, 2007, pp. 125-138.

Kīlputhupēt Iyannar temple. There he sat in *padmāsana* and attained his *Samādhi*. Morning people visited him as a crowd and put him into *Samādhi*[445]. Even today his *Samādhi* is maintained in a good manner[446].

According to another tradition, Lakśmaṇasāmy was born at Śaṇmugāpuram, to Paramaśivan and his wife. He got married Muṉiammāl, but he frustrated in family life. Then he became an ascetic and stayed in Mīṉāchipēt. As an ascetic, he was too popular and people praised him. Some persons from Puthupēt invited him to lay the foundation stone by his hands. He migrated from Mīṉāchipēt to Puthupēt in 1947 and died there. He was also known as '*Sākku Sāmiyar*'. It is recorded that "*On 1947, 12th month, 21st day,* he attained *samādhi*"[447].

Śri Dēvarāssu Siddhar (d. 1948 C.E.)

Śri Dēvarāssu Siddhar was lived in Puduchērry in between 1935 to 1948. He was found with dust clothes near Muthiālpēt. He stayed there in the Murugaṉ temple, constructed by one Miḷagāipaḻa Siddhar. One day somebody noticed that he was found with his limbs detached from his body. But on the next day, he found normal. For some days it was became the continuous news in that area. He attracted many devotees and solved their problems. After sometimes he was wandered near Marakkāṇam region. Then he attained his *samādhi* at Vaṇṇiya Nallūr village, which is located near two kilometers from Sūṇāmpēdu village of Madurāntakam Taluk. It is said that he attained *samādhi* on 22.06. 1948, nearly at the age of his 75; and he also had two disciples in Puduchērry named Gōvindasāmy and Rājappā[448].

Śri Aurobindo (1872-1950 C.E.)

Śri Aurobindo's real name is Aurobindo Ghosh. He was born in Kolkata (Calcutta) in 1872. When he was born, Bengal had been under British rule for more

445 C.S.Murugesan, *Puduchērry Siddhargal,* pp. 178-182

446 At present, the *Samādhi* is situated nearly 300 mts, to the west of the Iyannār temple. A roof is laid on that with cement sheet with mosaic floor. Now a hand pump is also installed for drawing drinking water. His statue in a sitting posture is installed facing east in the *Samādhi*. There is a *liṅga* at the head and a Nandi at the foot. No periodical or regular *pūjās* are conducted. People used to visit there very rarely. No annual *Gurupūjās* are conducted.

447 Sri Lakśmaṇa Samy's Life history given in a notice published by T. Vaithialingam, 72, V.O.C. st, Shanmugapuram, Puduchērry

448 C.S.Murugesan*, Op.cit*, 2007, pp. 162-169.

than a century. He left Kolkata in 1879 and was educated for fourteen years in England and left them in the care of a Manchester clergyman. There Aurobindo excelled as a scholar at St. Paul's School in London, and at King's College in Cambridge, he mastered in English, Latin, Greek and French. In 1890, he selected for the Indian Civil Service and completed the course and returned to India in 1893. Aurobindo remained in Baroda for thirteen years, working in various government departments and teaching at the local college. He also read deeply in English, Sanskrit and Bengali literature, and wrote poetry, essays and translations. In India he entered the State Service of Baroda and began to broaden his education with more intensive study of Indian languages and culture and to practice *Yōga*. From around 1902 he began to organise a secret society that, in the wake of the government's partition of Bengal, took part in some small revolutionary acts. He also became involved in the current political and social turmoil. The partition of his native Bengal in 1905 drew him into the nationalist movement to become the leader of the so-called Bengal terrorists. Settling in Kolkata in 1906, for four years he led his Nationalist party against the moderates of the Indian Congress. In 1908, He was arrested on suspicion of involvement in a bomb plot and jailed for sedition. While in Alipūr jail he underwent a religious experience which completely reshaped his life, reaching a state of *Samādhi* through *Yōga*.

After his release he abandoned politics and in 1910 travelled secretly to Puduchērry, a French settlement. There he established a *āśram*, wrote many works and developed his own philosophy, the *Integral Yōga*. In 1914 Aurobindo met a Frenchwoman named Mirra Alfassa, who had studied occultism in Algeria with a Kabbalistic master, and had contract with teachers like the Sūfi Hazrat Inayat khan and Abdul Baha, the leader of the Bahais. In 1920 Mirra settled in Puduchērry, where she became the centre of the spiritual community that was forming around Aurobindo. In 1926 he handed over the charge of this *āśram* to Mirra, and retired from public view. After 1926, Aurobindo was popularly called as Śri Aurobindo and Mirra as 'the Mother'. For the next twenty-four years, he remained in an apartment in his house, practising *yōga*, writing poetry, and answering questions posed by disciples. A selection of his letters, ranging in subject from metaphysics to the minutiae of daily life, was later published in five large volumes. Śri Aurobindo spent the last years of

his life working on a symbolic epic poem, *Sāvitri*. He died of kidney failure in 1950. Then after, 'the Mother' continued to run the *āśram*[449].

There is a dramatic contrast between the earlier and later life of Aurobindo, a shift from politics to religion which reverses the trend of the Ārya Samāj. Three years before his arrest, Aurobindo had begun the practice of *yōga* with the idea of getting power to help him in his work. After a few years of solitary *sādhana* he met a Maharāśtrian yōgin named V. B. Lele, who showed him how to silence his mind. This led to the experience of the "Passive Brahman", in which the Divine alone is seen as true, while the universe appears to be unreal. A few months later, while in jail awaiting trial for conspiracy, Aurobindo had the wider experience of the Divine as simultaneously transcendent of and immanent in the universe. This came to him as a vision of Kṛśṇa in all things and beings, which revealed to him the higher levels of consciousness that, link the manifested world to the un-manifest Divine. One of these, the super-mind, became the key to his future *sādhana* and the central term of his philosophy. Aurobindo believed that this power could transform human life into a divine existence. The goal of spiritual discipline was not an escape from the round of *samsāra* but a state of individual and collective perfection in the body and on earth[450].

Aurobindo's thought was basically another *Yōga* system, though incorporating elements of terminology from other systems. His major innovative works were conceived and written in English and the best known being *The Life Divine*. However, his system does give a more definite place to the world, which possesses real value, and Aurobindo believed firmly in evolution, seeing its goal as the divinization of man, an extension or transference to the human race as a whole of *tāntric* ideas about perfecting the body. Indeed he explains the title of *Integral Yōga* which he gave to his system as expressing the blending of the different *Yōga* systems each with its own approach through body, mind and so on. As he puts it in one of his tracts for disciples, '*Yōga* means union with the Divine – a union either transcendental (above the universe) or cosmic (universal) or individual or, as in out *Yōga*, all three together'.

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[449] J.L, Brockington, *Op.cit.*, pp. 183-184; see also Peter Heehs (ed.), *Op.cit.*, p. 455

[450] Peter Heehs (ed.), *Op.cit.*, p. 455

Śri Aurobindo's Teaching and Method of *Sādhana*

The teaching of Śri Aurobindo starts from that of the ancient sages of India that behind the appearances of the universe there is the Reality of a Being and Consciousness, a Self of all things, one and eternal. All beings are united in that One Self and Spirit but divided by a certain separativity of consciousness, an ignorance of their true Self and Reality in the mind, life and body. Śri Aurobindo's teaching states that this One Being and Consciousness is involved here in Matter. Evolution is the method by which it liberates itself; consciousness appears in unconsciousness, and once having appeared is self-impelled to grow higher and higher and at the same time to enlarge and develop towards a greater and greater perfection. Life is the first step of this release of consciousness; mind is the second; but the evolution does consciousness which is spiritual and supra-mental. The next step of the evolution must be towards the development of Super-mind and Spirit as the dominant power in the conscious being. For only then will the involved Divinity in things release itself entirely and it became possible for life to manifest perfection. This method is to be found through the ancient psychological discipline and practice of *Yōga*. In the past, it has been attempted by a drawing away from the world and a disappearance into the height of the Self or Spirit. Śri Aurobindo teaches that a descent of the higher principle is possible which will not merely release the spiritual Self out of the world, but release it in the world, replace the mind's ignorance[451].

Thus, Śri Aurobindo, along with the Mother, contributed too in the field of divine philosophy as well as to the spiritual subjects. For his divine works and appearance, he is still celebrated as a great Siddha of Puduchērry. Even today, the *Samādhi* worship of Śri Aurobindo and the Mother is remarkable one, which remains as a remnant of continuing tradition of the Siddha cult, which attracts more number of foreigners, than the local people. As a well-known fact, he taught the *Vēdas* and *Upaniṣāds* to the national poet and Siddha Subramaṇiya Bhārathi. And also he was the contemporary of Śri Ramaṇa *Mahariṣi* of Tiruvaṇṇāmalai. Even after the death of Śri Aurobindo, many Siddhars lived and living in Puduchērry.

[451] Peter Heehs (ed.), *Op.cit.*, p. 465

Vēdānta Siddhar (1872-1962 C.E.)

The real name of Vēdānta Siddhar was Tāṇḍvarāyan. He was born in 1872, at Tirumarugal village of Tamil̲nādu, as the second son of Chokkaliṅga Mudaliyār. At his 12th age, he got interested in going pilgrimages and went out from his home. Then he became the disciple of one Rājagiri Periyaṛ at Virāli Malai and learnt *Vēdanta*, *Tiruvāsagam* and other songs of the Siddhars from him. Then he met Moun̲a Siddhar at Chidambaram. Then went to Tiruvāvadudurai and studied *Prabhuliṅga Līlai*, *Śivajñānabōdham* form Appāvu Piḷḷai. Then he met Sāmi Vivēkān̲anda near Tirunelvēli, which resulted in dragging him again to the family life. He went back his home and got married his elder sister's daughter. As a part of his life, he started a business and also decided to settle in Puduchērry, which was under the French. Meanwhile he fathered two male and one female child. But after his wife's death, he again became an ascetic. At the same time he ran a *Vēdānta Pātasāla* at Chetty Street of Puduchērry. Therefore, people called him as Vēdānta Sāmiyār and Vēdānta Siddhar. He also got many disciples. He got more famous among the people of Puduchērry. But soon, due to his old age, his eyes became blurring and he also wants to take rest. At last, he was died on 17.09.1962, and his body was buried at Vasanth Nagar near Muthiālpēt. At present a temple was constructed on his *samādhi* and the principal deity was named as 'Vēlāyudha Īswarar'[452].

Maṇṇuruṭṭi Sāmigaḷ (d. 1965 C.E.)

The real name of Maṇṇuruṭṭi Sāmigaḷ was Rāmakriśṇan. His father Mun̲isāmy Piḷḷai was a Tamil̲nādu policeman and his mother Raṅkanāyaki. Mun̲isāmy had three male and three female children and one of them was Rāmakriśṇan. When he was studying his final year undergraduate course, he dragged into the mystic world and stopped speaking with others. Therefore, others thought that something was happened to him. But soon he left his home and started doing meditation in the forest of Tiruvaṇṇāmalai. When his parents requested to come back, he silently followed them to Paraṅgipēṭṭai (Portonovo) near Chidambaram. After her mother's death, he moved to Cuddalore and then to Puduchērry. In Puduchērry he was named as '*Maṇṇuruṭṭi'* means one who rolls the soil like beads. Because, when he was thinking deeply he had

[452] C.S.Murugesan*, Op.cit*, 2007, pp. 183-190.

the habit of rolling the soil by his fingers. Soon he also had the power of foretelling one's death. In Puduchērry, he stayed in one of his follower's house named Jīvarathiṇa Udayār at Kuyavar Pāḷayam. On January 16, 1965, he attained his *samādhi* and his body was buried at Govindasāmy Piḷḷaithoṭṭam near Swadēśi Cotton Mills[453]. At present, it is surrounded by many buildings and one has to reach this place through a mechanic shed.

Vā̱lapa̱la Sāmiyār

The native place, birth and other biographical details of Vā̱lapa̱la Sāmiyār is not known to anybody. For sometimes, he wandered near the Sāram region of Puduchērry. He dwelled among the pigs, in the midst of the drainage with dust clothes. It is said that daily morning a cow came to him; he offered a banana and worshiped the cow. How he got the banana and from where the cow came to him was remained obscure. Hearing this, day by day, devotees gathered to meet him, but he refused. However, he had two disciples at last. To them he foretold about the coming of government buildings and an Amman idol to be unearthed from the place he stayed. After few years, the government automobile workshop, and the Puduchērry Collector Office were established in that place. Besides, an idol was also unearthed when the place was dug for laying foundation to those government buildings. Therefore, the place was named after the idol as 'Śakti Nagar'[454].

Sadai Thāyārammāl

Sadai Thāyārammāl lived near Pākkamudaiyānpēt in Puduchērry. Since she was found with a long matted hair (*Sadai*), and appeared to be a mother (*Thāyār*), she was called as 'Sadai' Thāyārammāl. During her childhood, she lived near Perumukkal Hills, an ancient archeological and historical site famous for its rock bruisings. One day, when she happened to stay in the temple which is located on the top of the hill, she met a Siddhar and learnt about the herbal medicines from him. She worshiped the idol that was being worshipped by the Siddhar. Then she left her home and went to Puduchērry and engaged in meditation in one of her relative's house. She could solve

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[453] Interview with Mr. Madhavan (72) and Balakrishnan, (70), devotees, Viduthalai Nagar, Mudaliarpet, 09.09.2010; C.S.Murugesan, *Op.cit*, 2007, pp. 108-115.

[454] C.S.Murugesan, *Op.cit*, 2007, pp. 85-87.

the physical and mental ailments of the people through the sacred ashes and medicines[455]. Subsequently, where she went and when she died remains unknown.

Muruganadimai Patchaiyammāl (1927-1981 C.E.)

Muruga̱nadimai Patchaiyammāl was born on 19.06.1927 to Subburathiṇam and Taiyalnāyaki. She got married at the age of eighteen to one Taṇḍapāṇi, son of Duraisāmy and Pōṛsilai; and resided at *Sālai Theru* of Puduchērry town. After six years of her marriage she delivered a female child. She happened to meet a Siddhar at Pa̱la̱ni and got initiation from him and became a great devotee of Lord Muruga. After engaging herself in deep meditation she gained the miraculous power of foretelling. However, she continued to lead her family life till she was 27 years old. During her lifetime she was engaged in foretelling, removing witchcrafts, and performance of many miracles like a Siddha. She breathed her last on 01.11.1981. As a staunch devotee of Lord Muruga she earned the name '*Muruga̱nadimai*' (slave of Muruga̱n) and people worshipped her as a most powerful female Siddhar[456]. She was buried at Muthiālpēt grave yard. A small shrine was constructed at that place and every year *gurupūja* is also celebrated.

Śri La Śri Māthāji Siddhar (1908-1998 C.E.)

Śri La Śri Māthāji Siddhar @ Śri Rāja Nārāyaṇāṉanda Siddhar's real name is Rājam. She was born to Mr. Pa̱la̱ni and Muthulakshmi, in 1908. She got married one Nārāyaṇsāmy, who was also considered as a Siddhar. After their marriage, they shifted to Paraṅgipēṭṭai and stayed there for five years. A female child Maṇi and a male child were born to them. Then they shifted to Mailāduturai. Her husband died on 30.8.1964. Subsequently, in 1969, she migrated to Puduchērry and stayed there for nearly thirty-three years. In between, she had visited almost all the important pilgrim centres of India. She also visited Śrilaṅkan temples. She passed away on 25.11.1998, at the age of ninety. She was born on *Tiruvōṇam* star, Wednesday and died on the day of same star *Tiruvōṇam* and Wednesday[457]. Her only son, Ōṅgāra̱nanda, is running a

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[455] *Ibid*., pp. 116-124.

[456] Interview with Mr. Chakravarthy (72), and Deivānai (63), devotees, Thennañjsalai Road, Puduchery, 13.11.2010; C.S.Murugesan, *Op.cit*, 2007, pp. 203-221.

[457] Swāmy Ōṅgāra Nanda, *Ōṅgāram*, 'Śri La Śri Māthāji Siddhar' (spl issue), Vol. 42, No.6, 15.11.2013, pp. 18-20

āśram on his name at Puduchērry and propagating his parent's ideologies to the world through a monthly magazine called 'Ōṅgāram'[458].

Appā Paithiyam Sāmy (d. 1999 C.E.)

Appā Paithiyam Sāmy was a native of Vēttaikāran Pudūr, near Pollāchi of Coimbatore district. He belonged to family of landlords and left his home at the age of six. Then after he met one A<u>l</u>ukkusāmy at Pa<u>l</u>a<u>n</u>i hills and became his disciple. He got some *siddhis* from him. Since he used to smoke '*bīdi'*, he was also called as '*Bīdi Sāmiyār'*. Then he roamed many villages and towns like Udumalaipet, and performed some miracles like healing the diseases, solving the problems of his devotees, removing witchcrafts, etc. He also was having the knowledge of foretelling. He also roamed for some period in Puduchērry and attracted most of the popular politicians and higher government officials. For him, one Tiruthuṛai Pūṇdi Natarājan established a *āśram* at Karuvadikuppam of Puduchērry[459].

Appā Paithiyam Sāmy attained his *samādhi* on 11.2.1999 on Friday night at 9.00 PM., at the age of his 144(?). At Salem, a *samādhi* shrine with his idol was also constructed. Mr. Raṅgasāmy, the Chief Minister of Puduchērry (2011-2016) is a staunch devotee of this Appā Paithiyam Sāmy. He will take all important decisions only after visiting and worshipping his spiritual *guru*. After he won the 2011 legislative assembly elections with thumping majority and successfully formed his government, he constructed a new shrine similsr to the one at Salem, with his statue of Paithiyam Sāmy, behind the Gōrimēdu police station. Every year on 28th of the Tami<u>l</u> month Cittirai, his birth anniversary is celebrated in a grand manner.

From the above study, it is clear that the cult of Siddhas is attaining popularity and prominence in Puduchērry. The legendary stories of the Siddhas also reveal the continuity of the Siddha tradition in Puduchērry. It is well known that the Buddha himself wrote nothing. Spiritual influence and personal example apart, his teaching was communicated entirely by oral means, through discourses to, and discussions

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458 A book is also published regarding her spiritual experiences, teachings, ideas of Māthāji by Swāmi Ōṅgāra Nanda, *Irubathām Nūtrāṇdin Iṛuthi Siddhar*' (Tami<u>l</u>), Ōṅgāram Publications, Puduchērry, 1998

459 Interview with Radhakrishnan (68) devotee, Tattāñchāvady, 16.10.2010; Mohanambal (57) devotee, Karuvadikuppam, 18.10.2010; and Gopalakrishnan, (62) N. R. Congress, Gorimedu 7.7.2011; C.S.Murugesan*, Op.cit*, 2007, pp. 170-177.

with, his disciples and members of the public, as well as through inspired spontaneous utterance[460]. Similarly the Siddhas of Puduchērry region as well as in parts of Tamiḻnādu, from the past century, wrote nothing about their cult or philosophy, but it is their followers who made those siddhas popular and placed them in a divine status among the other popular Siddhas of the Tamiḻnādu, popularly known as *Pathinēn-siddhars* or the eighteen Siddhas.

Kuṇḍalini Māmuṉivar

Kuṇḍalini Māmuṉi is believed to be a great Siddha. The locals accept that he is a Siddha who spent most of his life in the Tiruvakkarai temple and sang in its praise[461]. He breathed his last in that temple and a *Samādhi* was built over his mortal remains within the temple premises. The *Sthalapurāṇa* states that Vakkarāsūra, a demon who belongs to the tradition of Kuṇḍalini Muṉivar ruled this place[462]. The original name of this Siddha or the period of his existence is unknown[463]. However, the term '*Kuṇḍalini*' represents one of the popular *yōgic* practices which have been often practiced by the Siddhas. By practicing the *Kuṇḍalini yōga*, this Siddha might have got this name.

The Sūfi Siddhas

Sūfism claims to be the highest expression of Islamic ideals and principles. According to its followers, surrendering to God means absorption into God himself. Sūfis developed a variety of techniques to assist the dedicated practitioner on the way to mystical experience[464]. *Wahdatu'l Wujūd* (Unity of being or Oneness of Existence) emerged as the most important Sūfi principle through the works of a Sūfi scholar Ibn 'Arabi (1165-1240). He emphasized that as transcendence and immanence are two

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460 A.L. Basham, *A Cultural History of India*, OUP, Delhi, 1975, p. 88

461 However, none of his songs are available or popularly spread over in this area.

462 Different types of legends are there regarding this Siddha. Traditions say that, he was the grandfather of the Vakkarāsūran. See C. S. Murugesan, *Pugaḻ Mikka Kāli Tirukkoilgaḷ* (Tamiḻ), Sankar Pathipagam, Chennai, 2010, p.89

463 In fact the original names of many popular siddhas are still not known to anybody. Most of these Siddhas were given with Pseudo names by the respective scholars who worked on those Siddha literatures. For instance, the name of the Siddhars like Pāmbāṭṭi, Agapēy, Kudambai are not their original names. These are names given to them by the refrains which they often use in their songs.

464 Joseph Stoutzenberger, The Human Quest for God: An overview of World Religions, Twenty Third Publications, New London, 2006, p.135

fundamental aspects of Reality, God is both Transcendent and Immanent. 'He is absolute Being, and is the sole source of all existence; in Him alone Being and Existence are one and inseparable'. There is no such thing as union with God in the sense of becoming one with God, but there is the realization of the already existing fact that the mystic is one with God'. This philosophy was very compatible with the theistic philosophy of Gōrakṣnāth and his followers[465].There are many Sūfi saints in and around Puduchērry, who were worshipped as Siddhas and got elevated to the status of demi-gods. Some of them are preserved in the oral tradition and local literary compositions. What is significant about these Sūfi saints is that the command respect and devotion from a cross section of he society without any distinction of caste, creed, faith, gender and economic status.

Pīr Muhammad

Pīr Muhammad was a Sūfi saint born at Tenkāsi (Tirunelvēli District), meditated at Pīrmēdu (Kēraḷā State) and spent his last days at Takkalai (Kan̲n̲iyākumari District), where his tomb is visited by Hindus and Muslims on all Sundays and Thursdays, especially in night. He was a mystic poet belonging to the Quateriya order[466] of the Sūfis, and has sung nearly 18,000 verses in Tami̲l on mysticism. His *Jñāna Rattiṇa kuṛavañji* is included as the 11th book in the *Jñānakkōvai*. In this he speaks of *Om*, Śiva and the *Kuṇḍalini yōga*. His *Jñānamaṇimālai* – 242 is an exposition of Sūfism in Tami̲l. His works reconcile Siddha cult and Sūfism[467]. His other poetic works are *Jñān̲a Puga̲lchi, Jñān̲a Kuṛaḷ* and *Jñān̲ā Pāṭṭu*. His verses resemble both in substance and structure the Siddha poems[468].

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465 On an intellectual level, Sūfis were influenced by a *haṭha-yōgic* treatise entitled *Amṛta Kuṇḍa*. It was translated several times into Arabic and Persian, and taught the Sūfis their meditative practices, as well as imparting information about herbs and chemistry. Various anecdotes indicate that Sūfis approved of some ethical values of the *Yōgis* as well as of their corporate way of living. See A.L. Basham, *Op.cit.*,pp.286-287

466 This order was founded by Mohiuddin Abdul Quadir Jalani (1077-1166). For more details see R.Venkataraman, *Op.cit.*, p. 173

467 *Ibid*., p. 173. But there prevails a controversy regarding the birth place and period of Pīr Muhamad. Venkataraman dates him to 17th century and S. N. Kandasamy dated him to 19th century. For further details see also S.N. Kandaswamy, *Op.cit.*, p. 68

468 S.N. Kandaswamy, *Op.cit.*, p. 68

Guṇaṅguḍi Mastān (1788-1835 C.E.)

Guṇaṅguḍi Mastān was one of the celebrated Sūfi Siddhas of 18th - 19th centuries. He was named after his village Guṇaṅguḍi of Rāmnād District. He was born in 1788 as the son of Sheik Mirān. His real name was Sultān Abdul Quādir Labbai Ālim, later popularly known as Guṇaṅguḍi Mastān. From his boyhood days he continued to live the life of an ascetic. He roamed in the hills and forests of Saduragiri, Puṛāmalai. Nāgamalai, etc., and spent his whole time in isolation. He perfected himself in *yōgi*c meditation. He was initiated into the Sūfi mysticism by Sham Sāhib of Trichy. After his initiation he went to Sikandarmalai (Tirupparaṅkunram), and practiced *Yōga* very severely. He had. He too belonged to the Quateriya order of the Sūfis and has written more than 1,000 verses in Tamil̲, longing for the grace of Muhammad as his *Guru*. He gained many disciples both from the Hindus and the Muslim who were largely attracted by his songs and teachings. He was well versed in the Islamic theology and the spiritual and devotional writings of Hindus in Tamil̲. It is essential to note that Guṇaṅgudi Mastān̲ was greatly influenced by the poems of Tāyumān̲avar. In his songs one can notice the imitations of the writings of Tāyumān̲avar. Besides, terms, forms and thoughts of the Tamil̲ Siddhas are also reflecting in the songs of Mastān Sāhib[469]. For instance, Mastān Sāhib in his *Manōnmaṇikkaṇṇi* denotes the Supreme Being of the Sūfis by using the terms peculiar to the Tamil̲ Siddhas, such as Umaiyāl, Nandi, Vālai, Manōnmaṇi, etc. Basically he was a Sūfi Siddha. In his *Agattiar Satakam* he invokes the blessings of Mohiruddin (the founder of the Quateriya order of Sūfism) and requires for a union with his 'Beloved' (the Supreme Being) through *Yōgic samādhi*[470]. Mastān̲ like the other Siddhas performed many miracles. All his poems are published in an anthology with the title *Guṇaṅgudi Mastān̲ Pādalgaḷ* or *Guṇaṅgudiyār Pādal Kōvai.* The tone and texture of his poems are very close to those of the poems of the Siddha[471].

469 M. Arunachalam, *Op.cit.*, p. 282

470 R.Venkataraman, *Op.cit.*, pp. 173-74

471 S.N. Kandaswamy, *Op.cit.*, p.68

Meyvaḻisālai Āṇḍavar (1890-1976 C.E.)

Meyvaḻisālai Āṇḍavar is one of the modern Sūfi Siddhas. His original name was 'Kādar Bāsha'. He was born in 1890 and died at the age of 86. This Sūfi Siddha said that he belongs to the tradition of Siddhas beginning from Macchamuṉi. Initially he was served as a police constable, but resigned his job and got initiated by one Taṇigaimaṇippiran into the mystic cult. He set up a *āśram* near Pudukkōttṭai and had thousands of followers. He expressed his views in speeches and only a few of them are published and circulated among the initiated. This Sūfi Siddha did not yearn for God, but he attempted to attain the superior occult powers by which he wants to become the 'Supreme dispenser of the judgement day'. While he was speaking about himself, he always addressed as first person plural. He claimed himself as a God and wanted his followers to believe that he was the only true God and his abode was the true temple. During his lifetime he claimed to have established one family of mankind and shown to the world that God is one, which he himself is. But finally he was died in 1976[472].

Śri Moulā Sāhib (18th Century)

Moulā Sāhib was born in a rich trader's family of Veḷḷala community in Arcot, Tamiḻnādu. He never cared about or respected money and wandered according to his will. One day he saw one Muslim '*pakkiri'* (*Fakir*) and was inspired by his speech and appearance, then started following him up to Mecca. After returning from Mecca, Moulā Sāhib totally changed as a Muslim both in appearance and thought. He came to Puduchērry and stayed at Lāl Bhahadūr Sāstry Street for a long time and propagated his divine ideals, and disappeared from that place suddenly. After few months a coffin was seen floating in the sea near Puduchērry. The Muslim leaders suspected that the coffin may be one of their elder's. Therefore it was buried just opposite of present Local Administrative Department, near Seventh Day Church (Victor Simoneal St.). When Puduchērry became a French Colony and their population increased in the town, the Muslims were driven to the Black town from there. Thus the *Samādhi* which was located nearer to G.H. in white town was left uncared without any worship or maintenance and finally got dilapidated.

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472 R.Venkataraman, *Op.cit.*, pp. 174-75

It is said that Moulā Sāhib one day appeared in the dream of the *Kājiyār* (head of the Mosque) and village headman and informed them, that he was buried in that *Samādhi.* Then onwards, *Kājiyār* started worshiping it, even he was teased by the public.

Since it is located in the Christian dominated area, some of them complained to the French government. The French Government requested *Kājiyār* to abandon his worship. Therefore he appealed to the Puduchērry Governor Francōis Mārtin (1699-1706) to relocate the the *Samādhi*. As a result, on one Friday, the Muslim devotees and French officials gathered before Moulā Sāhib's *Samādhi*. They dug the place and took the coffin in a procession to the present Mullā Street of Puduchērry and buried it. When they opened the coffin, they noticed that the body was kept with Muslims' custom of burial and remained without any decay, even after several years. Presently a *Darga* and next to it a mosque was built near the *samādhi*. Every Thursday and Friday, people are coming and worshiping here. Some elders believe that even today, Sāhib will be wandering here[473]. Now Moulā Sāhib considered as one of the '*Auliyas'*. A poem was written near the *samādhi* "*Al Arbu Rappāni Valla Raj Jul Hara maini va Sāhib Suba naini Syed Ahmad Moulā Sāhib (Katha Salla hi)*", which means 'In the centre of the coconut grove under its shadow, the God's palace, is taking rest').

Mahān Badē Sāhib

The *samādhi* shrine of Mahān Badē Sāhib, a Sūfi saint, at Chinnabābusamudram is getting famous day by day. During his early days, he stayed in Tirukkanūr and cured various diseases of the surrounding people. Then he migrated to Chinnabābusamudram located some twenty kilometers west of Puduchērry, and stayed near a pond. It is said, though a Muslim, he renovated the Śiva temple, which is found adjacent to his *Samādhi*. There, he often played with local children. He asks them to dig a pit and close him in it. After few minutes, he came out of it. Likewise, at the time of *samādhi*, he offered sweets to the children and asked them to close him in the pit. But he never came out of it. He attained his *samādhi* on 12.02.1868. Since then, every year on this day *gurupūjā* is being conducted regularly. A perpetual lamp

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473 C.S.Murugesan, *Puduchērry Siddhargal,* (Tamil), pp. 191-196.

is placed in his *samādhi*. At present thousands of people gathering for worshipping him daily.

The Doctrine of *Bhakti* and the modern Siddha Cult

Starting from the medieval period, *Bhakti* played an important role in various phases. Very often Asceticism and *tridaṇḍi* (triple staff) ascetics were honoured by the Hindu devotees. The Āḻvārs, Nāyaṉmārs, and to some extent the Tamiḻ Siddhas like Paṭṭiṇattār, Tāyumāṉavar, etc. have made significant contributions to the development of Bhakti and to the formation of its present doctrine. *Bhakti* is an emotional attachment towards a personal god with simple disposition. One can practice it without any discrimination of caste, creed, or gender. Today following the footsteps of realized souls like Siddhas, is considered as a best way to develop one's *Bhakti* than performing the *Jñānayōga* and the *Karmayōga*[474].

In the Peninsular region, the Siddha movement transcended its religious confines and established itself as a powerful platform for a new socio-cultural dispensation. The Nātha-Siddha movement which openly challenged the caste system and supremacy of the Brahmins had gained popularity among the masses. Besides, the amalgamation of the *Bhakti* thought with Sūfi philosophy, and its liberal and emancipatory ideas influenced *Bhakti* doctrine in great measure. Some of the typical Muslim concepts like equality and brotherhood were further resonated and revitalized the social vision of the Siddha movement[475].

From the 9th century C.E., the Kālāmukha-Pāśupata sects became an integral and powerful part of Śaiva religion through the *matha* organization. They are believed to be anti-*Vēdic* and anti-caste in origin[476]. Vīra-Śaivism, a reformist division of the Kālāmukha sect originated both as a counter to Jain ascendancy and as an anti-caste movement in Karnātaka was also influenced by *Tamiḻ Śaiva bhakti*[477]. Although the

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[474] N. K. Sundareswaran, 'The Concept of Bhakti in Naradhabhaktisutra and Sandilyabhaktisutra', in Journal of *Sukrtindra Oriental Research Institute,* Kerala, October 2013, Vol.15, No.1, pp. 4-5

[475] Braj Ranjan Mani, *Op.cit.*, p. 143.

[476] Romila Thapar, 'Renunciation: The Making of a Counter Culture', in *Ancient Indian Social History: Some Interpretations*, Orient Longman, New Delhi,1978, p.75; David N. Lorenzen, *The Kāpālikas and Kālamukhas: Op.cit.*, pp. 148-9

[477] See A.K. Ramanujan, Speaking of Siva, Baltimore, 1973. See C.N. Venugopal, 'Lingayat Ideology of Salvation: An Inquiry into some of its Social Dimensions', *Religion and Society*, Vol. XXIX, No. 4,

Tamil̲ Siddha School represents an important and interesting offshoot of the pan-Indian *tāntric-yōga* movement, it promently depict features such as anti-Brāhmanism and even anti-ritualism[478].

Tirumūlar, one of the canonized *bhakti* saints, was the greatest of the Tamil̲ Siddhas, who laid emphasis on the Śiva and Murugan̲ worship. His analogy of the human body and the temple of god, and the idea of the body as a fit instrument for the soul in pursuit of self-discipline and quest for god, provided a convenient alternative to the icon in the temple. His canonization took place in the 12th century as a part of the attempts to resolve the societal and ideological crisis of the times which were due to the claims for greater non-Brahmana participation in temple ritual and temple administration.

As mentioned earlier, the growth of *tāntrism* in north and the growth of *bhakti* movement in south were enrolled irrespective of caste. The *bhakti* movement was led by a series of popular Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava saints called Nāyaṇmārs and Āl̲vārs respectively. These saints rejected austerities and looked upon religion as a living bond based on love between the god and the worshipper, instead of a formal worship. The chief objects of their worship were Śiva and Viṣṇu. Almost all of them disregarded the inequalities of caste, though they did not try to oppose the caste system as such. Thus, the revival and expansion of Hinduism took two forms viz., a renewed emphasis on the *Vēdas* and *Vēdic* worship, accompanied by a powerful literary and intellectual movement; and a popular movement based on *tantra* in north and on *bhakti* in south[479].

Samādhi Worship

Samādhi is a state of being in which all action of awareness is abolished and there is no consciousness at all except the pure supra-mind immersion in immobile,

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December 1982; K. Ishwaran, *Religion and Society Among the Lingayats of South India*. New Delhi, 1982; see also David N. Lorenzen, 'The Kalamukha Background to Vira Saivism' in S.K. Maity et.al. (eds), *Studies in Orientology*, Agra, 1988, pp.278-93; R. Champakalakshmi, 'From Devotion and Dissent to Dominance: The Bhakti of the Tamil Āl̲vārs and Nāyaṇārs', in David N. Lorenzen (ed.), *Religious Movements in South Asia:600-1800*, OUP, Delhi, 2004, pp.70-71

478 Kamil V. Zvelebil, *The Poets*; see also David Shulman (eds), *Orthodoxy, Hetrodoxy and Dissent in India*, Berlin: Mouton, 1984, pp. 32-36

479 Satish Chandra, *A History of Medieval India*, Orient Black Swan, New Delhi, 2007, p. 54-55

timeless and infinite being[480]. *Samādhi* worship is now becoming more popular all over the country. There exist thousands of such cemeteries of great Saints and Siddhas, which are considered to be important places of worship, which provide spiritual strength and power to the devotees. (See Appendix 3) Therefore, people nowadays started worshipping the cemeteries of the great Siddhars who attainted their final liberation. Among all other *Siddha Kśētras* of the country, the *Samādhi* worship attained more popularity in Puduchērry when the *Samādhi* of Śri Aurobindo and Śri Aṉṉai came into existence. The *Āśram* attracted more devotees, since the *Yōga* of Aurobindo was meant for the transformation of the world. Religion or caste, race or nationality was no bar for being admitted into the *Āśram*. Life in the *Āśram* is marked by an inner discipline. The *Sādhana* is based on the *sādhak* aspiring for a higher consciousness, his surrender to the Divine and a constant effort at rejecting all falsehood from his actions and thoughts. Unlike other Siddhars, Aurobindo did not perform any magic or miracles but he advocated the path of *Yōga* for salvation and meditation for mental peace. This attracted more number of devotees from all over the world. Aurobindo attained his *Samādhi* on December 5, 1950. The Mother left her body on November 17, 1973. Śri Aurobindo's *Samādhi* had an upper chamber where her body was placed on the 20th November. Then after, the Āśramites started to meditate in the courtyard around the *Samādhi* of Aurobindo and the Mother. Collective meditations take place twice every week in the evenings of Sundays and Thursdays[481].

The *Samādhi* of Sāmy Siddhāṉanda is located at Karuvadikuppam (in front of the Fathima Hr.Sec.School). He is considered as the most celebrated Siddhar in Puduchērry. Most of the Siddhars who belongs to Puduchērry region are said to be the followers of the Siddhāṉanda and worshipped his *Samādhi*. Every year on the Tamiḻ month of Vaikāsi 15th, the *Gurupūjā* is celebrated in this *Samādhi* shrine with pomp and glory. Next to the *Samādhi* of Siddhāṉanda Sāmy, one can witness hundreds of devotees in the temple of a Sūfi saint Mahān Badē Sāhib at Chiṉṉabābusamudram.

480 V.V. Rampal, *Belief, Reality and Religious Practice*, Nag Publishers, Delhi, 2007, p. 165

481 The descending triangle represents the aspiring answer from matter under the form of life, light and love. The descending triangle represents *Sat-Chit-Āṉanda* (Existence-Consciousness-Bliss). The junction of two-the central square is the perfect manifestation having at its centre the *Avatar* of the Supreme-the lotus. The water inside the square represents the multiplicity, the creation. See Francis Cyril Antony, *Gazetteer of India, union Territory of Pondicherry*, 1986, pp. 1600-1604.

Tuesday is considered to be an auspicious day in this temple. He used to stay under the *Magiḻam* tree, where the present temple is constructed in an octagonal shape. He attained his *Samādhi* on February 12, 1868. Therefore, every year on the Tamiḻ month of Māsi, the *Gurupūjā* is celebrated in this temple in a very grand manner[482].

Like Badē Sāhib there is another *Samādhi* of a Sūfi saint known as Moulā Sāhib in Mullā Street of Puduchērry town. On that *Samādhi*, one *Darga* and next to it a mosque was built. At present, people often visit this mosque and worshiping it regularly on every Thursday and Friday. After *Bakrid* festival, ten day festival is celebrated here. On the last day 'Sandal Decoration' (*Sandana Kūdu*) is celebrated[483].

The *Samādhi* of Aḻagappa Siddhar is found near Aiyanār temple in Thennampākkam, a remote village located around 30 km to west of Puduchērry. *Gurupūjā* is celebrated in this cemetery every year, on the first Monday of the Tamiḻ month Cittirai (April-May), the day on which the Siddhar attained his *Samādhi*. At present this temple is popularly known as Aḻagar Temple. There is a tradition prevailing in this temple, that if one wants to get a male child, they have to offer a small statue of a boy to this Siddhar. Then they will surely get a male issue. Similarly one who wishes for a female child, they have to offer a female statue. If their children are not reading well, they have to offer a statue of their children like reading with books, if they are handicapped with parts of their body; they have to offer the image of that part. In this way, one can witness thousands of concrete images of boys and girls around the *Samādhi* of the Aḻagappa Siddhar.

Kathirvēl Sāmy was said to be a native of Śrilaṅka. He shifted his hut in the Kandankudi of Brindhāvaṉam area and attained his *Samādhi* there. The present 'Sithankudi' area where his cemetery is located is only named after the Kathirvēl Sāmigal. The *Samādhi* shrine (*Siddhar Pītam*) of Śri Akkā Paradēsi Sāmy is located at Vaithikuppam, a village situated on the north east of Puduchērry town. He attained his *Samādhi* in June, 1872. His 141st *Gurupūjā* festival was conducted recently on the last week of June 2012. Along with him, his disciple Nārāyaṇa Paradēsi's *Samādhi* is also found in the same premises and his 141st *Gurupūjā* was conducted on December 2012.

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482 Pamphlet (like *Sthalapurāṇa*) issued in the temple of Mahān Badē Sāhib.
483 C.S.Murugesan, *Op.cit.,* pp. 191-196

The *Samādhi* (*Siddhar Pītam*) of Śri Śaktivēl Paramāṉanda Sāmy is found in the old Puduchērry-Cuddalore road, near the railway gate of Kāramaṇikuppam. Few years back, a big shrine was built on the *Samādhi* of this Siddhar. He attained his *Samādhi* on 23rd of Tamiḻ month Ādi. A *Samādhi* was constructed in that place. But for a long time, it was left without care. Then by the efforts of the workers of AFT mill, *Gurupūjā* was conducted from 1998 onwards. At present one can witness a red coloured big shrine near the railway gate[484]. The *Samādhi* of Śri Thēnkāi Sāmy is situated at Tattāñchāvady, near electricity sub-station of Villianūr. It is structured like a small temple iron sheet in which a *liṅga* is installed in it. Few years back the damaged hut was renovated with Iron sheets (as it looks today) and made it as a place of worship. Now *Gurupūjā* was celebrated every year[485].

Peculiar names of the Siddhas

Many of the Tamiḻ Siddhas are known popularly by their personal names and some other derived names like Gaṇapathi Dāsar, Sūryāṉandar, Pūraṇāṉandar etc. Some of them concealed themselves in a different type of pseudo names such as Puṇṇākkīsar, Kāgapusuṇḍar, Pūṉai Kaṇṇar, Appā Paithiyam Sāmigaḷ and Thoḷḷaikādu sāmiyar. Similarly some of the names of the Siddhas were taken up from the phrases or refrains which they frequently used in their songs. For instance, the names like Agappēy Siddhar, Kudambai Siddhar, Śivavākkiyar, Pāmbāṭṭi Siddhar and Akkā Paradēsi Swāmigaḷ are picked up from the phrases which they often employed in their songs or the words often used by them. Pāmbāṭṭi, Ahappēy and Kudambai Siddhars derive their names by using *āḍu Pāmbē*, *ahappēy* and *kudambāi* respectively as refrains in all their stanzas. Aḻukaṇi Siddha may have been named by the scholars due to the wailing quality of the metre employed by him. Iḍaikkāḍar's songs are designed as dialogues between two shepherds and Kaḍuveḷi Siddha probably by using the term *veṭṭaveḷi* as a symbol of the ultimate. Some of the names of the Siddhas differ from the usual Tamiḻ names and they are considered as foreigners or were connected with foreign countries in many ways, as they visited such country, or did their penance there, or went of collecting the medicinal herbs, to teach the *yōgic* practices etc.

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484 C.S.Murugesan, *Op.cit.,* pp. pp. 155-161.

485 C.S.Murugesan, *Op.cit.,* pp. pp. 88-90; interview with Mr. Arumugam, (O/M, Dept of Sociology, Pondicherry University) care taker of the *Samādhi* Shrine (09.09.2009).

Most of the Siddhas concealed their original names and assumed pseudo names or nicknames, probably to differentiate themselves from other groups of intellectuals and devotees. Best examples to these kinds of names are Vaḷḷalār, whose real name is Rāmaliṅgam. But he got this name because of his philanthropic character. Another of this kind is Avvaiyār, a well-known female Siddha whose real name is un-known. But she was called so far by the people because of her appearance as an aged woman. Similarly, Siddha Bhadragiri's real name is also unknown. But the word *bhadra*, means beauty, grace, goodness, caution, safety and also an elephant; and *Giri* means mountain. Hence the name Bhadragiri may stands to show him as a strong-minded person with all spiritual values. To the same belong the names such as Saṭṭi Sāmiyar, Pavaḻakodi Sāmiyar, Maṇṇuruṭṭi Sāmiyar etc.

Likewise, some of the Siddha names are suffixed by the village names of their origin or places of residence. For example, the names like Paṭṭinattār, Iḍaikāṭṭu Siddhar, Koṅgaṇar, Karuvūrar, Kailāya Kambaḷi Saṭṭaimuṉi, Kañjamalai Siddhar, Kollimalai Siddhar, Poṇṇimalai Siddhar, Ēmbalam Appār Sāmigaḷ, Yāḻpāṉathaḍigaḷ and recently, Madurai Vālai Sāmi, Guṇaṅgudi Mastān, Tirukkāñji sāmiyar etc,.

In Puduchērry region, some of the siddhas are called by the names of edible items such Thēṅgāi Sāmigaḷ (coconut), and Vāḻaipaḻa Sāmigaḷ (Banana). But, speaking generally, all the available lists are mixed with a lot of fictions and confusions instead of authentic historical information.

Celebrated *Siddha Kśētras* of Tamiḻnādu

From very simply marked sacred tree, a snake hill, a smeared stone, a *samādhi* shrine, a picture of a favored deity, to enlarged temples, there are thousands of sacred centres found all over the Tamiḻnādu. Of them, the places dedicated to Siddhas and their *samādhis* attract millions of devotees. In case of Siddha *samādhis*, devotees often visit such places, circumambulate, prostrate, or in other ways do obeisance what they knew. Many of the Siddha shrines at present were maintained by a local non-brahman priest. On important events or festivals, a goat or chicken is also sacrificed to these Siddhas. Nowadays some devotees frequently started visiting these *siddha-kśētras* with their whole family and offers special *pūjās*. In fact, many of the employees visit these shrines, particularly on Thursdays for *darśan*, and then only

they proceed to their works or working places. In many of the Siddha shrines, a congregational worship in the form of singing devotional songs and *bhajans* are also come into practice as like other Hindu temples.

Gradually many of these Siddha shrines in some places are worshipped as clan and folk deities. Then these Siddha shrines or *samādhis* become sanskritisized. Some of them become more prosperous and attain more popularity and importance due to increased status in which the brahmanical mode of worship is taking place. As time passed these Siddha shrines attracted other groups of people who later choose these centres as their favourite pilgrim centres. In many of the newly established Siddha shrines, the Brahmin priests were appointed initially on hiring basis for performing *āgamic* rituals. In some centres, idols are also installed following the āgamic stipulations of consecration rituals. Besides, the Siddhas (if their names are not known) are named in sankritisized style and integrated into the mainstream Hindu pantheon. Many of these shrines are upgraded to popular religious centres and attract the devotees in large number. Some of such *Siddha Kśētras* are discussed below. (See Appendix 3)

Pa̲la̲ni Hills

Pa̲la̲ni Hills (10°26'N; 77°31'E) is located in the southern part of Tami̲lnādu. It is one of the wealthiest temple complexes in the south. Pa̲la̲ni has become truly popular only in recent times. It is true that a Tami̲l text dating back to the 6th century refer to a site which this temple claims as its own, and the temple's *sthalapurāṇa* claims that medieval kings came to worship here. The site was also associated with medicinal ascetics in the medieval period. The favored deity at Pa̲la̲ni is Muruga̲n, Tami̲lnādu's favorite god. He is ensconced atop the local hill in the guise of an ascetic, there he is said to have come when angered by his parents, Śiva and Pārvathi, who had offered a fruit symbolic of their favor to Muruga̲n's elder brother Gaṇēśa. It is only after Śiva came and told Muruga̲n that he was the fruit (*Pa̲lam nī*), that is, the true embodiment of his father's authority and attributes, that the young god was assuaged[486].

Pa̲la̲ni is also known as '*Sittan vā̲lvu*', referred to in the earliest Tami̲l litetrary sources like *Koṅgumaṇdala Satakam*. The famous Tami̲l poet Nacchinārki̲niyar says

[486] Fred W. Clothey, *Op.cit.*, p. 200

that 'Sittan' is one of the thousand names of Lord Muruga̱n[487] and here '*Vāḻvu'* means abode or habitation. Since lord Muruga is residing in this hill, it is named '*Sittan Vāḻvu'*. The Tamiḻ Woman Siddha poetess Avvai, a well-known devotee of Muruga̱n says that, *Sittan Vāḻvu* also known as *Tiruāvina̱n kudi*, a place where there is a regular monsoon rains come with thunders without fail, which leads to the growth of paddy and sugarcane; in every house, the three fires (*Āgavēṉīyam*, *Kārukapatyam*, and *Dakśiṇākkinēyam*), exist without any change' is also called as *Koṅku maṇdalam*[488].

Even today Paḻaṉi is famous for its living tradition of Siddhas such as Sākkadai Sāmiyār, Aḻukkumūṭṭai Sāmiyār[489], Pugaḻēndhi Siddhar, etc. The Sākkadai Sāmiyār is presently staying at the foot of the hills of the Paḻaṉi town, on the way to the famous Taṇḍayudhapāṇi temple. Since he seated near the drainage canal and his real name and nativity is unknown, he is popularly referred by the people as Sākkadai (drainage) Sāmiyār. It is said that he is staying in the same place continuously for more than thirty years[490].

Poṉṉimalai

Poṉṉimalai is located approximately five kilometres to the south of Āyakudi village of Paḻaṉi tāluk in Dindigul district of Tamiḻnādu. The hill is located exactly in the southeastern side facing the Paḻaṉi hills, which is clearly visible from Poṉṉimalai. A popular tradition prevailing among the people of Poṉṉimalai region is that Poṉṉimalai siddha, a disciple of Bōgar, pissed on the hill, and it became gold. Therefore, the hill is named as Poṉṉimalai, meaning 'Golden Mountain'. Every year, the annual celebrations were conducted to this Poṉṉimalai Siddhar. Sometimes he is also identified with the Pulippāṇi Siddhar, as he is also a disciple of Siddha Bōgar. Earlier it is difficult to climb the hill (in 2008), which has no proper path. But after

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[487] T.A. Muttusamy Konar, (ed.), *Koṅgumaṇdala Satakam*, (Tamil), Sadhu Press, Chennai, 1923, p. 84

[488] *nelluṅ karumbuṅ kamugum palaṉṛara nērparuvach chellam parathitisaith thuppoḻin thōṅkidu sittanvāḻ, villaṅ thoṛumun ṛeryidaith theṉṉa velākkalaiyum vallathaniyaḷavai kūṛiya thuṅ Koṅku maṇdalamē*. See Karmega Kavingar, *Koṅgumaṇdala Satakam*, verse 63, (Tamil), in T.A. Muttusamy Konar, (ed.) *Op.cit*, p. 83

[489] A Siddha in similar name was also found in the lists of Puduchērry Siddhas and he was referred in the songs of Subramania Bharathi.

[490] Interview with Mr. Selvaraj (58), Paḻaṉi on 17.5.2013. Selvaraj came to Paḻaṉi in 1984 and engaged in the research on preparing herbal medicine. He is organizing one 'Vadivāmbigai Trust' and often conducts free camps on herbal medicine.

few years (2013), when the name and fame of this Po<u>nn</u>imalai Siddhar gained popularity, with the grand donation of the devotees, a path was temporarily arranged to climb the hill. Interestingly on the top of the hill, few memorial stones and few utensils used for oblations were also found. In archeological point of view, the bricks available on the top and terracotta figures found under the foot hills seem to be more than 100 years old (Figs. 168-169)

Kañjamalai

Kañjamalai (11°37'2 N; 78°3'35 E) is located fourteen kilometres to the west of Salem in the Salem district of Tami<u>l</u>nādu which is famous as the abode of Kañjamalai Siddhar. The word '*kañjam*' literally denotes the gold, copper or iron. There are many legends connected with this hill and the *Koṅgumaṇdala Satakam* frequently describes this hill. The legend also connects it with Adiyamān, the Tami<u>l</u> ruler who gave the *āmla* fruit to the Siddha Poetess Avvaiyar. It is also associated with the Siddhas like Tirumūlar, Kālaṅgināthar, and other Tami<u>l</u> Siddhars. On the top of the hill a shrine known as *Siddhar Kōil* is dedicated to Kañjamalai Siddhar. Besides, there is also a Muruga<u>n</u> temple of recent origin. The famous Śiva temple known as Siddhēśvara temple is located in the foothills dedicated to Kālaṅgināthar. Local people also called this temple as '*Amāvāsai* temple' and New moon day and full moon day, receives more attention of the devotees. It is said that many Siddhas in their invisible form are wandering around these hills and guiding the devotees. The waterfalls flow as a stream from the top called '*Po<u>nn</u>i Nadhi*'. Taking a dip in this water is considered as sacred and auspicious and believed to cure the skin diseases, due to the surrounding medicinal herbs.

Saduragiri

Saduragiri hill (9°40'N; 77°38'E) is situated around ten kilometres from Vathirāiruppu village near Śrivilliputūr of Virudhunagar district of Tami<u>l</u>nādu. The name '*Saduragiri'* is derived from the word *Chatur* – four and *giri* –hills. It also represents the hills of four *Vēdas*, four directions, etc. It is also called with several names like Brahmagiri, Indragiri, Sūryagiri, Kailāśa, Siddhagiri, Mahaliṅgagiri, Śivagiri, Udayagiri, etc. There are many legends related to Saduragiri. A *āśram* of

Athri *Mahariṣi* and his wife Anusya Devi is associated with Tāṇippāṛai in local legends. It is popularly believed as an abode of the Siddhas.

The foothill of Saduragiri is known as Tāṇipāṛai (9°42'N; 77°37'E). From Tāṇipāṛai to Saduragiri hilltop is around seven kilometres, and normally it will take nearly four to five hours to reach the hilltop. It falls under the range of Western Ghats. Many popular Siddhar like Agastya, Bōgar, Pāmbāṭṭi, Gōrakṣa, Saṭṭaimuṉi, Rōmariṣi, etc. and their legends are associated with this hill. From the foothill to the top one has to cross many small shrines dedicated to Lord Gaṇēśa, Rājakāḷi Amman, Pēcchi Amman, Karuppusāmy, Gōrakṣa cave, *Iraṭṭai Liṅgam* (double *liṅgam*) or Saṅkaran-Nārāyaṇan *liṅgams*, Vana Durga, Sundara Mahāliṅgam and Santana Mahāliṅgam temples. At Santana Mahāliṅgam shrine, separate shrines dedicated to 'Eighteen Siddhars', lord Gaṇēśa, Murugaṉ, *Navagrahas*, Santana Mahādēvi and Āṉandavaḷḷi Amman *Maṇḍapa* are existing. Daily *Pūjās* are conducted regularly to these shrines. Besides, on full moon day and new moon day, special *pūjas* are also conducted. To the devotees, who visit this pilgrim centre, free rice gruel (*kañji*) is offered by 'Saduragiri *Kañjimadam'* organized by Śri Kālimuthu Sāmigal trust, established by one Bhadrakāli Amman in 1972. Besides, free food offerings were also made by the volunteers and devotees on special days. At present, in addition to the above, there is one Agastya Aṉṉadāna Trust and one Śiva Saṅgu Ayya Aṉṉadāna trust are providing free food to the devotees. Devotees firmly believe that there are many siddhars living in this hill. Famous among them are Talai Āṭṭi Siddhar of Perumbālūr, Kālidās Siddhar of Paḻaṉi and the above mentioned Kālimuthu Sāmigaḷ, who attained *samādhi* in 2004 and his *samādhi* is found at his *āśram* in S. Ramachandrapuram, located fifteen kilometres from Śrivilliputhūr[491].

Maruthamalai (Fig. 167)

Maruthamalai (11°2'N; 76°52'E) Is located 13 km to the west of Coimbatore town. It is famous for its Murugaṉ temple, located on the hilltop. Since it is covered by '*Marutham'* trees, it got the name, Maruthamalai, the hill of *Marutham*. It is also

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[491] There are many books and guides are available about the Saduragiri hills. But, all of them serving merely as a tourist information guide consist of attractive legends and no historical information found in it. Only a few related books are included in the bibliography, found at the end of this work. The information given above regarding individual siddha kśētras are all based on the information gathered from the field work conducted by the researcher.

considered as the seventh abode of Lord Murugaṉ. The temple is also famous for the Pāmbāṭṭi Siddhar cave, located on the slope in the eastern side of the Murugaṉ temple. Now parapets are constructed for the protection of the pilgrims who visit there. It is said that, Pāmbāṭṭi Siddhar did penance in this cave and attained *aṣtasiddhis*[492]. The entrance and meditation *maṇḍapa* of the Pāmbāṭṭi siddhar cave as well as the entrance *Rājagōpura* of the Murugaṉ temple were built by Mr. M.A.Chiṉṉappa Tēvar of Coimbatore, a famous film producer who also produced many devotional movies in Tamiḻ, and considerably propagated the fame of Maruthamalai through his films allover Tamiḻnādu. He also provided electric lighting all along the steps leading to hilltop from the foothill, and in 1963, he constructed a road from foothill to the hilltop to run the buses[493].

Important days like *Thai Pūsam*, *Kiruthikai* star, temple car (Tēr) festival during the Tamiḻ month of Vaikāsi (May-June), *Ādi perukku* on Ādi eighteenth, *Navarātri* festival, *Kārthikai Dīpam*, Mārgaḻi festivals are celebrated in this temple in a grand manner. All the festivals and *pūjās* are conducted to Lord Murugaṉ only; the cave of Pāmbāṭṭi Siddhar gets only a little importance in this regard. People believe that, if one who visits this cave, need not worry abou the poisonous snake bites; their skin diseases will be cured, they will attain more knowledge and intellectual powers, peaceful mind and thought etc.

Veḷḷiaṅgiri

Veḷḷiaṅgiri (10°59'N; 76°41'E) also known as '*Dakśiṇa Kailāśa'* or '*Then Kailāyam*' is located around forty kilometres from Coimbatore town, formerly known as 'Koṅkumaṇdalam'[494]. At the foot of the hill, a village named Pūṇdi and recently established Dhyānaliṅga Meditation centre are situated. Both these centres have a high spiritual ambience. It is believed that countless Siddhas have their abode here and many of the ascetics are performing their penance here. The chief deity of Veḷḷiaṅgiri is known as Veḷḷiaṅgiri Āṇdavar and his consort is Maṉōnmaṇi Amman.

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[492] But, it is also believed that he attained *Samādhi* at Saṅkarankoil of Tamiḻnādu. The hills like Saduragiri, Kollimalai, Bhavāni in Erode, Puliyūr and Madurai are also connected with this Siddhar. However, at Marudhamalai only he got attained the power of *aṣtasiddhis* through his penance.

[493] P.S. Manian, *Kovai Maruthamalai Murugaṉ Magimaiyum Varāḷarum*, Vijaya Pathipakam, Coimbatore, 2011, p. 40.

[494] But no references found about Veḷḷiaṅgiri in *Koṅkumaṇdala Satakam*.

The temple is situated at the foothill of Pūṇdi, the peaceful place from where one has to start climbing he hill. One has to trek around 6 km to reach the summit of Veḷḷiaṅgiri, which has an altitude of 6000 feet. People believes that the hill is sanctified and surrounded by abodes of the great siddhas like A̱lukku Siddhar, Pa̱la̱ni Sāmigal, Soundarapāṇdi Siddhar, Kālathri Siddhar, Eṭṭikoṭṭa Siddhar, Miḷagāi Sāmiyar, Mysore Sāmiyar and so on. There are seven hills in Veḷḷiaṅgiri to represent the seven *cakras*[495]. In the first hill, the shrine of Veḷḷi Vi̱nāyakar; in the second hill - *Pāmbāṭṭi Su̱nai* (water fountain), in the third hill - *Kaitaṭṭi Sunai*; in the fourth hill Siddhar Ottar's *samādhi*; in the fifth hill *Bhīma Kaliyuruṇdai* hill, also called as '*Tirunīru malai* (sacred ash hill); the sixth hill - *Sethi̱lai* cave and *Āṇdi Su̱nai*; and finally in the seventh hill, the Lord of Veḷḷiaṅgiri, in a self-emanated phallic form (*suyambu liṅgam*) is found. Interestingly, at the entrance of the cave in the seventh hill, two natural stones are found on either side, representing the *dwārapālakas*. Mostly devotees come and worship the god in the Pūṇdi (foothill) Śiva temple. During the full moon day, devotees rushes here to climb the hilltop. Tami̱l New Year, Telugu New Year, *Cittirā Pournami* and *Kārthikai Dīpam* are some of the festivals celebrated here every year. Many ascetics are living in a tiled house is provided to them for performing their daily rituals at the foot of the hill. Daily afternoon, they decorate a palanquin and blow the conch and beat the drum like a funeral procession from their abode to the Śiva temple as a part of their ritual. The government of Tami̱lnādu is providing them lunch in the afternoon. At the foothills of Veḷḷiaṅgiri, a newly established meditation centre known as Dhyānaliṅga is located. It was consecrated by Sadguru Jaggi Vāsudēv. He is considered as a great *guru*, mystic and master *yōgi* by the devotees. The size of the Dhyānaliṅga is about 13.9 feet high. Devotees are allowed here free of cost to sit and meditate peacefully to experience the vibrations found inside the meditation centre.

Ka̱ṉnivādi

Ka̱ṉnivādi (10°22'N; 77°49'E) is located twenty-two kilometers from Dindigul, on the Pa̱la̱ni-Dindigul-Madurai highway. It is said that Bōgar did his penance here, before making the '*navapāṣaṇa'* idol of Pa̱la̱ni Āṇdavar. Nearer to this,

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[495] Besides, the 6 km of trekking and 6000 feet are also the symbolical representation of the six *cakras* and one has to cross these six to reach the hilltop or the seventh *cakra* '*Sahasrāra'*.

there is one Rājakāli Amman temple in which a separate sanctum is dedicated to Bōgar. The Siddhar festival is celebrated on eighteenth day of the Tamiḻ month of Ādi (August). Towards the west of the village about five kilometres away, one can reach a hill which is celebrated as an abode of Siddhas. Apart from few natural caves, there is a cave in triangular shape in which it is said that the Siddhas like Meikaṇdār, Bōgar and others did their penance and also engaged in the preparation of herbal tinctures. Devotees from various places frequently visit this *samādhi* shrine. Annual festivals and the birth anniversary of the siddhas are also celebrated here.

Kollimalai

Kollimalai or the Kolli hills (11°14'N; 78°20'E) is located in the Salem district of Tamiḻnādu. It is famous, because of the Siddhars who stayed there are popularly known as Kollimalai Siddhars[496]. The Arappālīśvara temple is situated on the top of the Kolli Hills, dedicated to Lord Śiva and Goddess Tāyāmbal. It is an ancient temple, sung by the *Tēvāram* Saints. The Kolli hill itself is famous for a beautiful sculpture of *Pāvai*, often referred to in early *Saṅgam* literature as *Kollippāvai*. A sculpture is now identified as *Kollippāvai* but it seems to be an image of Kāḷi of the Cōḻā period. From time immemorial, the Śiva temple has been held in high veneration by a Śaivite saint and his followers and is one of the foremost sacred *sthalas* in the *Koṅgu* country. The present structure goes back to the period of the early Cōḻās[497]. It is seen from the temple records that the temple continued to occupy a very important role on the top of the hill right through the centuries till very recent times. The Kolli hills are also known for medicinal herbs grown in plenty which are used both by *āyūrvēdic* and Siddha medical practitioners. According to the *sthalapurāṇa* the Kolli hills were inhabited by saints and sages in ancient times, particularly by Siddhas. Archaeological evidences point to the existence of Jaina

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[496] To reach this hill, one has to come from Salem-Rāsipuram route and climb up for about 5 kilometers from the Puḷiyañchōlai village.

[497] Number of inscriptions found on the walls of the temple records dedications to Lord Śiva and his consort during the reigns of Uttama Cōḻā (late 10th century C.E.), Rājarāja I, Rājādhirāja, Rājamahēndra and Kulottuṅga Cōḻā. One of the donors is the famous Cōḻā queen Sembiyanmahādēvi, the queen of Gandaraditya, the mother of Uttama Cōḻā. The Kolli hills is also the residing place of a tribe called Malaiyāla Goundar. R.Nagasamy, *Art and Culture of Tamilnadu*, Sundeep Prakashan,Delhi,1980,pp. 92-94

followers in various parts of the hills. The Kolli hills consist of a row of tall hills with a central valley and are often called as Sathuragiri[498].

Kāñcipuram

Kāñcipuram (12°50'N; 79°42'E) of Tamiḻnādu was once famous for its Buddhist Siddhāchāryās. It is believed that Ācāryā Nāgārjuna (500 C.E.) was initiated to mystic doctrine by one Vajra-Sattva, a resident of Kāñci. Then one Amōgha-Vajra, one of the disciples of Vajra-Bōdhi, (Bōdhi-Darma) another native of Kāñci was believed to be responsible for the introduction of *Tāntric Yōga* tradition in China and taught them esoteric philosophy[499].

Mādampākkam

Mādampākkam (12°55'N; 80°7'E) is located near East Tāmbaram, a suburb of Chennai. It is famous for the recently constructed 'Eighteen' Siddhar temple. It was constructed at the instruction of Sathguru Sēśādri Sāmigal of Tiruvaṇṇāmalai. This Eighteen Siddhar temple is dedicated to Śricakra Mahāmēru, a form of Mother Goddess called Śri Lalitha Tripurasundari. Daily hundreds of devotees visit this temple in search of peace and solace. The Siddhar shrines constructed here are dedicated to Sathguru Sēśādri Sāmigal of Tiruvaṇṇāmalai and other Eighteen Siddhars like Śivavākkiyar, Kailāya Kambaḷi Saṭṭaimuni, Bōgar, Kāgapusuṇdar, Pulippāṇi, Agapēy, Kudambai, Saṭṭaimuṉi, Vaḷḷalār, Idaikātar, Paṭṭiṇatār, Kaduveli, Kañjamalai Siddhar, Chennimalai Siddhar, Kapilar, Karuvūrār and Pāmbāṭṭi Siddhar. Besides, few other shrines dedicated to popular Hindu deities like Viṣṇu, Śiva, Gaṇēśa, Murugaṉ, Ayyappan, the Śaiva saints like Appar, Sundarar, Sambandar and Māṇikkavāsagar, etc.

Vadalūr

Vadalūr (11°33'N; 79°33'E) is located ten kilometres from Neyveli town, in the Cuddalore district of Tamiḻnādu. It is famous for the Satya Jñāna Sabai established by Vaḷḷalār Rāmaliṅga. Pilgrims and tourists from many parts of the country frequently visit this place. On 23rd of May, 1867, Siddhar Rāmaliṅga established

[498] R. Nagasamy, *Op.cit,*.1980, pp. 92-94

[499] Alice Getty, *The Gods of Northern Buddhism*, New Delhi, 1978, p. 31

Satya Dharmasāla, to feed the needy and poor. Since he advocated, only vegetarian food is provided to all, most of the devotees dwelling in the surrounding villages are also converted to vegetarianism. Daily morning 5 AM to evening 8.30 PM, devotees sing *Tiruvaṛutpā* songs, and thrice a day they sing *Arutperuñjothi Akaval* and special *pūjās* are also conducted. Thursday is considered as more auspicious and special *Bhajans* are arranged. At *Satya Jñāna Sabai*, Vadalūr, which he established on 25th January 1872, daily morning 11.30 to 12.AM and evening 7.30 to 8 PM, *Tiruvarutpā* is recited along with special *pūjas*[500]. Besides, the *Thai Pūsam* festival falls in the month January, the day, Siddha Rāmaliṅga presumed as light, lakhs of devotees gather here to see the *Jyōthi Darśan*.

Vadakku Poigai Nallūr

Vadakku Poigai Nallūr (12°54'N; 79°33'E) is famous for its Kōrakkar (Gōrakṣa) *samādhi* shrine. This village is located six kilometres south of Nāgapaṭṭinam town and nearer to the Bay of Bengal. From here the town of Vēḷḷāṅkaṉṉi is around six kilometres. It is said that Siddha Gōrakṣa attained *samādhi* here some 300 years ago. Many monks live in the temple who go to the surrounding villages only once in day for begging food. The rural people respect these monks as Siddhars.

Tiruvaṇṇāmalai

Tiruvaṇṇāmalai (12°13'N; 79°4'E) is a well-known *siddha-kśētra* in Tamiḻnādu, which is also known for its impressive hill and a great spiritual attraction. The Lord enshrined in the great Temple at Tiruvaṇṇāmalai is known by the name of Aruṇāchalēśvara with his consort Umā, here known as Apithakucha Nāyaki. In Tamiḻ they were popularly known as Aṇṇāmalaiyar and Uṇṇāmulai Amman. It is believed that Brahma and Viṣṇnu sought the furthermost limits of Aruṇāchala, while He stood as a huge column of fire. The failure of their efforts brought the two primal Gods to realize the truth of their own Being, and this day is celebrated as the *Mahāśivarātri*

500 Similarly, at Siddhivaḷākam in Mēṭṭukuppam village, where Vaḷḷalār attained his *siddhis*, special *pūjās* and reciting *Tiruvaṛutpā* is conducted from 6 AM to 8.30 PM; at Marudhūr village, (11º2'N; 79º34'E) where he was born the same worship is conducted from morning 5 AM to night 8 PM; and at Karuṅkuli near Chennai, where he stayed for nine years and lit a lamp using water, daily 5 AM to 8 PM, the above worship is conducted.

Day. It is also said that Umā, under the guidance of Riṣi Gauthama did her penance here. During her penance she encountered and killed Mahiśasūra. On one full moon day of *Kārithigai*, Umā went round the hill and obtained her rightful half in Śiva. To commemorate this, the *Kārthigai* festival is celebrated here.

The hill here is considered the very form of Aruṇāchala. Many have gone clockwise round the hill and obtained the great powers (*siddhis*). It is said that groups of 'Perfected Ones', the Siddhas, are eternally going round this hill. Therefore, every month on the full moon day, thousands of devotees gather at Tiruvaṇṇāmalai, one of the major pilgrim centres in South India, to take part in the monthly ritual conducted in the Aruṇāchalēśvara temple and also mainly to join in the *girivalam*. Devotees experience oneness with their god when they walk around the hill. On the way they worship more than hundred *liṅgams* which are different to each other in its character and divinity. They also believe that Siddhas and devotees from various parts of the World walk around the hill on that day. Coming around the hill make one to feel like they are crossing the world, the universe and passing through the clouds and constellations. Most of them feel that they got spiritual union with the god in this fifteen kilometers long *girivalam*. They also feel that circambulating this hill gives them spiritual power and relief from other tensions and sufferings. It is said that the Ramaṇa *Mahariṣi* and Siddha Sathguru *Mahariṣi* preaches devotees to walk around the hill at least once in their life. The Siddhas who dwells around this sacred hill says that going around the hill once destroys the *karma* from their rebirth.

Besides above, Tiru-Jñānasambandar and Śri Vagīsa, two of the Śaivite Saints have visited this spot and sung of Aruṇāchala and Umā; five of their Hymns on Aruṇāchala are found in the *Tēvāram*, and the world famous *Tiruvembāvai* of Māṇikavāsakar was first sung near Ādi-Aṇṇāmalai temple which located behind the hill. Besides, it was here, the great Siddha Aruṇagirināthar with his grand experience of the Self (*jñānaṉubhūti*) flourished and spread the glory of Lord Subramaṇia by his *Tiruppugaḻ* songs. In accordance with fame of this Hill, many great souls have been drawn here and few of them are Guhanamaśivaya, Gurunamaśivaya, Isānyadēsika, Sēśādriswāmy, Yōgiram Surathkumar and most importantly Śri Ramaṇa *Mahariṣi*[501].

[501] T.K. Sundaresa Iyer, *Op.cit.*, pp.96-97

Besides them, it is believed that there are several Siddhas still living in this hill. Even today, one can frequently witness number of such ascetics roaming around Tiruvaṇṇamalai hills, temple, and town and also around at the *Girivala* path.

Parvatha Malai

Parvatha Malai (12°26'N; 79°0'E) is located near the Kadalādi village, thirty kilometers north-west of Tiruvaṇṇāmalai, in the Tiruvaṇṇāmalai district. The hill is almost 4,000 feet in height. Though it is difficult to climb, now steps are constructed for the benefit of the pilgrims. At its very top, there is a vertical rocky cliff called *Kadappārai Malai*. As many crow bars (*Kadappārai*), are erected in this vertical hill for climbing it the hill got this name. The presiding deity of the Parvatha hills is Parvatha Rāni. She is also known as Parvathammāl and Brahmarāmbhika or Brahmarāmbha. It is not known when exactly the temple was constructed at the top of the hill. But it is sure that, since it is bearing the name of Mallikārjuna and Brahmarāmbha of the Śrisailam of Āndhra Pradesh, it is exactly the replica of the Śrisailam which also known as Śriparvata. Śrisailam is most familiar for its Siddha cult. Similarly, this Parvathamalai of Tamiḻnādu is also now attaining more popularity due to a Siddha called Swāmi Mouṉaguru.

Chettavarai

Chettavarai is a small village in Gingee Taluk in Viḻupuram district of Tamiḻnādu. It is located (12°15'N; 79°24'E) forty kilometres northwest of Viḻupuram and twenty kilometres southeast of Tiruvaṇṇāmalai[502]. Chettavarai Śri Śivajōthi Mōna Siddhar is a living Siddhar, aged above 70. His origin and biographical details are not known. He came and stayed at the foot hills of Chettavarai, near Pūvāthamman temple probably in 2011 and stayed there for nearly one year. The place he stayed was already a pre-historic site popularly known as Chettavarai or Ayyanār Malai, where there found remnants of potteries and dilapidated brick structures, seems to be a habitation site. At present, it is a cultivable land in which the crops like ground nut, gingili, pulses and other cash crops are cultivated. This site is also famous for its pre-historic paintings of fish, deer, elephant, birds, bull, etc. and at the foot hills there are remnants of basement of a Śiva temple. It is said that after the arrival of this Siddha,

[502] Kīḻvālai, an important rock art site of Tamiḻnādu is located 18 km south east of Chettavarai)

who stayed here for few months, reconstruction works were started in this temple and the Nandi and *Śivaliṅga* were installed, with the help of few philanthropists from Puduchērry region. Then in 2012, Śri Śivajōthi Mōna Siddhar was shifted to the western part of Chettavarai village, which is located in the Señji (Giñji) road, some three kilometers away from the Pūvāthamman temple, where he stayed earlier. A *āśram* was established in a hut at the outset and at present (March 2014), a big temple is under construction, which is to be dedicated to lord Śiva, and a plan was made to install a *Śivaliṅga* at the height of thirty-two feet from the ground level.

The *āśram* of Śivajōthi Mōna Siddhar is located in the western end of the Chettavarai Village in the Señji-Vēṭṭavalam route with good transport facility. This *āśram* is about three acres of land in which they are maintaining a Gōśāla and also feeding the devotees and visitors. Many devotees who renounced from their worldly life joined this *āśram* and doing voluntary services. For example, an ascetic named Pugal̠ēndhi, aged 32 is serving here as a cook. He belongs to Ooty and he had completed his Diploma in catering technology. For the last nine years he is living as an ascetic, and what dragged him to be like this is unexplainable[503]. Besides him there are some more ascetics (*aḍiyārs*) in staying in the *āśram*, and they refused to tell about them, except some usual philosophies used by all other common ascetics, and one of them was Śrirām (aged 40), an *aḍiyār* belongs to Tiruvaṇṇāmalai, and he dragged here due to the grace of this Śivajōthi Siddhar[504]. This Śrirām and other ascetics are placed in the entrance hut of the *āśram*. They are engaged in collecting the entrance fee (Rs.10); and other donations from the visitors/devotees and giving tokens (with three lemon fruits). In this *āśram* no *yōga* or meditation is performed. Only keeping silence is considered as a great practice and prayer. Śivajōthi Siddhar himself advocated silence. In front of the Siddhar's room, where the Siddha used to sit and attend the queries of the devotees, the philosophies of popular Siddhas and songs from *Tirumandiram* are displayed in small banners. For example the songs describing about the characters of a true Siddha from *Tirumandiram*[505] is displayed for the public.

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[503] Interview with Pugalendhi (32), āśramite, Śri Śivajōthi Mōn̠a Siddhar Āśram, 11.3.14

[504] Interview with Sriram (40), āśramite, Śri Śivajōthi Mōn̠a Siddhar Āśram, 11.3.14

[505] Song No. 2565, 8th *Tantra*, p.1050; and Song No.1463, 5th *Tantra*, p. 569

Tiruvāmāthur

Tiruvāmāthur (11°58'N; 79°28'E) is located approximately five kilometres northwest of Viḻupuram. It is the holy place where a great saint, an ascetic, a Siddha, a mystic by name *Vaṇṇa Sarabham* Daṇḍapāṇi Swāmigal attained *sajīva samādhi* (entering his own tomb alive) on 5th July. He was born in Tirunelvēli. He is popularly known as 'Murugadāsa Swāmigal' and '*Tiruppugaḻ* Swāmigal'. He was a great devotee of Lord Muruga. He visited many Muruga and Śiva temples and experienced eternal bliss in singing the glory of the deities of those places. He lived in Tiruvāmāthur for very long time. He has written the *sthalapurāna* of this temple translating from the Sanskrit original, *Nāgara Khānda* of the *Skānda mahāpurāna* in Tamiḻ, on palm leaves, which comprises of 1000 verses. The *samādhi* of *Mahān Vaṇṇa Sarabham* Daṇḍapāṇi swāmigal is situated in a garden by the side of the Abhirāmēśvara temple. In the shrine of Lord Śaṇmukha, he established a *Samādhi maṉdiram* (at present a functioning like a library), and composed '*Kaumāra Niśchayam'*. There is a stone image of this Siddha in a standing posture with a *daṇda* in his hand and dressed with a simple *laṅgōti*. There is also an Utśava mūrthy of this Siddha in this shrine. He has written '*Vāra Tiruppugaḻ*' and '*Navaratna Tiruppugaḻ*' connected with this shrine. There are 3483 poems to his credit connected with this temple[506].

***Samādhi* of the Kuṇḍalini Māmuṉi- Tiruvakkarai**

The *Samādhi* of Kuṇḍalini Māmuṉi is located on the southern side of the Sanctum Sanctorum of Chandramoulīśvara shrine. A *liṅga* is installed in this *Samādhi* and a shrine was built over it. In the entrance of this shrine, *Dvārapālakas* were kept in its either side. This *Samādhi* shrine may be a latter addition to this temple which is found without any inscription on its outer walls. Though there are nearly forty three inscriptions in the sanctum and *arthamaṇdapa* walls of the Chandramoulīśvara temple, none of the inscriptions speaks about this Siddha[507]. Even though the

[506] Besides above, there are many information about the miracles done by the Siddha is largely explained in the newly published *Sthalapurāna* of the temple. But most of them are not useful for our study in a historical point of view.

[507] Of the forty-three inscriptions found on the walls and gates of the temple, inscriptions found right from the time of Rājarāja Cōḻā (saka year 1352 C.E.) and Kulottuṅga Cōḻā, to the time of Chemmandhai Kāṅgēya (1430 AD). See *South Indian Inscriptions* Vol. XII, No.246; Vol. XIII,

architectural style of this temple seems to be a late or post Vijayanagara it is without any ornamentation or sculptures in it, the life-size *Dvārapālakas* found in either side of the entrance may be similar to the Vijayanagara art. During this present century also many *maṇḍapas* and new shrines were constructed in this temple. Similarly, (in 2004) a *maṇdapa* is also built in front of the *Kuṇḍalini* Siddhar shrine/*Samādhi*. At the top of its entrance, two sculptures in cement are installed. Of these two, the sculpture which found with long beard and big belly in a seated posture is said to be the Kuṇḍalini Siddhar and the sculpture which found in opposite of Kuṇḍalini Siddha as the demon Vakrāsūran, the grandson of the Siddha.

Irumbai

Irumbai (12°0'N; 79°47'E) is a small village located around ten kilometres to the south of Puduchērry town in between the Tiṇḍivaṉam and Puduchērry National Highways. This village is largely connected with the legend of Siddha Kaduveli that he did his penance near the Irumbai Mākālēsvara temple. This age-old temple was most probably constructed during the Cōḻā period. The local traditions and temple *purāṇa* also have various kinds of legends associated with Kaduveli Siddhar and the temple at Irumbai is quite different from any other temple legend in the history of temple lore[508]. In the *ardhamaṇḍapa* of this temple, a life size bronze image of Kaduveli Siddha in a *padmāsana* posture is placed.

***Samādhi* of Veḷḷai Ādai Siddhar**

The *samādhi* of Veḷḷai Ādai Siddhar is located at Appupiḷḷaiyūr village in the name of *Śri Chittrambala Sadāśiva Jīvālayam*. This village is situated near the Koḻiñjanpāṛai-Pālakkād Road of Kēraḷā. Śri Chiṛṛambala Sadāśiva Siddhar was the disciple of Swāmi Śivāṉanda *Paramahamsa*, the great disciple who claims to be the descendent of Bōhar. It is said that Siddha Agastya named this Ciṛṛambala Siddhar as 'Veḷḷai Ādai Siddhar'. His *samādhi* shrine and the *Śivaliṅga* was designed and established by him. When he was alive, he donated dresses and offered food to the needy. He also did constructive works of the temples and medical treatments to the

Nos.285, 317; Vol. XVII, Nos.186 to 230 and Vol. XIX, No. 240. See also *Annual Report on Epigraphy*, Nos. 160 to 207 of 1904.

[508] One of the popular legend of Kaduveli Siddha is also given in the work of P. Raja and Rita Nath Keshari, *Glimpses of Pondicherry*, Busy Bee Books, Puduchērry, 2005, pp. 5-7

poor. This Veḷḷai Ādai Siddhar lived for nearly 108 years as a celibate. Then he attained his *Samādhi* on *Mūla* star of Tamiḻ month of *Karthigai* in 2008. This *samādhi* shrine was named as '*Padmakamala Chidambarālayam'*. In this *samādhi*, '*Chidambara Cakra'* and '*Tiru Ambala Cakra'* are placed together. The *Mahachittrambala yantra* was installed here for the benefit of the world peace. It is said that worshipping a living Siddha is equal to worshipping of 100 temples.

Ūdhiyūr Hills

There are many legends associated with this Ūdhiyūr hills. This hill is popularly known as Ūdhiyūrmalai, and also called as Sañjīvi hills. According to local tradition, when Hanuman carrying the Sañjīvi Mountain, a part of it was fell down at this place and formed these hills, therefore it is also called with above name. According to another tradition, the Koṅgaṇa Siddhar who stayed here produced gold by using base metals with herbal sauces. Since he produced the gold with the help of blast furnace using blow-pipe, this hills is called as Ūdhiyūr. (Here *ūdhi* in Tamiḻ means blowing air by mouth, to kindle the fire). Besides, it is also named after Siddha Koṅgaṇar as Koṅgaṇagiri. The Koṅgaṇa Siddhar's cave, where he stayed and did his penance is situated on the hill top of the Ūdhiyūrmalai. Inside the cave, one has to pass two entrances within the cave to reach the meditation place of the Siddha. This cave is located nearer to UtthaṇdaVēlāyudha Swāmy temple; and this temple is located at the distance of 13 kms from the Kañjanūr-Paḻaṉi road. On the way to the Koṅgaṇa Siddhar cave, his disciple Śri Seṭṭi Thamibiran Siddhar's *Samādhi* is located. All along the way to this cave, the path is surrounded by *vilva*/*bilva* (*aegle marmelos*) trees.

Historical Continuity of the Siddha Cult in Tamiḻnādu

During a particular period of time, this *Tāntric* Siddha cult was almost placed in a corner of the society due to the arrival of the Europeans and spread of the Western thoughts in India. However, the tradition was survived in different other forms, even it lost its importance and privileges as it possessed earlier. But suddenly this *Tāntric* Siddha cult once again started appearing in a refined form in new dimension, all along with other popular Hindu traditions and religions. Many of its practices were inculcated in the Hindu religion. Meanwhile, there emerged many

mystics who are all celebrated and followed by the common public as Siddhas, because of their philosophies, characters and other mystic powers. These mystics of the modern India, who emerged during the 19th and 20th centuries, were not isolated from the characteristics of their age. Through their personal experiences and innate powers, they attained divine powers and also believed and worshipped by others for their divinity in them. With the help of their inner experiences and powers, many of these modern Siddhas are come forward to change evils of the society and its immoral thoughts. Most of the saint-poets like Tāyumāṉavar, Rāmaliṅga Vaḷḷalār and Subramaṇiya Bhārathi identified themselves with the Siddhas and helped to provide continuity to the tradition. However, their traditions, religions and philosophies and their expressions shows that they were hailed from simple and humble origin.

There is no any proper definition made to define about the Siddhas and it had different connotations. For instance, persons who indulged in medical practices, magical or miracle workers, foretellers, fortune tellers, experts in astronomy, alchemical workers, *tāntric* practitioners, *yōgic* practitioners, mendicants in saffron, mad man in front of the temple or under the tree, all are now worshipped by the people as Siddhas[509]. Therefore, there arouse a big question, who is a siddha, but so far no proper answer found for that. However, these Siddha or Siddha-type practitioners all had in common that they saw or presented themselves as ascetic seekers after enlightenment or an equal goal within the Brahmanical tradition. The Siddha's spiritual descendants diversified and could be found in later centuries in a variety of garbs, from respectable royal-temple-priests to itinerant minstrels and religious mendicants. The Siddha thus evolved as a cultural category, taking shape and making sense within a particular social context. Frequently beggars, quacks and dubious god men are referred to by the name of Siddhas and they soon assume the status of religious gurus. Tamiḻs maintain a great fascination with this freely wandering figure with long hair and beard. They accord a place of honour for the local Siddhar in the temples. The tales and myths that surround the unknown figures of Siddhars in the village temples claim often that the divine power of the temples

[509] Earlier the term 'Siddha' is only used to refer the Jain monks who attained *mōkṣā* or liberation. The term 'Siddhar' is connected with Jaina and Buddhist religions for their psycho-physical exercises and practices. Buddha in one of his teachings says to 'treat the body as wound'. In Tamil, the word '*kāyam'* is used to denote the wound, now also for body.

depend on the Siddhar who chose to shrine himself. In a way religious practice and storytelling are ways of writing the social history of these heroes[510].

All the Siddhas are pure soul who was found with both formally distinct and indistinct ways of understanding. Pure cognition of this kind complies with the nature of the soul as a spiritual function exclusively. The Siddhas are freed from all kinds of *Karma*; they live forever in the highest of the regions and represent the highest possible development of a being. The basic ideologies of the Siddhas were shaped by their existing social position. Most of them came from families of shepherds, temple-drummers, potters, fishermen, hunters, etc. In fact, many legends were in vague about the Siddhas that some of them came from other culture traditions as well, Chinese and Arabic. They had connection with these people in the fields of medicine, alchemy and astronomy. It is said that Tirumūlar came from Kaśmir. It is difficult to determine the authenticity of these stories. But they definitely point to certain inter-mingling of the Siddhas and Muslim saints. It is important that Muslims Sūfis namely Pīr Mohammed, Mastān Sāhib, Badē Sāhib, Moulā Sāhib and to some extent the Shridi Sāi Bābā are included in the list of Siddhas. All this must have widened their cultural horizon and contributed to their liberal and egalitarian outlook. It clearly shows that they were ranged against the caste distinctions practiced by the so-called higher castes. Thus, there was no place for any discrimination with regard to caste in the brotherhood policy of the Siddhas[511].

In the present context, there exists many gods with the vast array of religious activities. However, the Siddha cult in Tamil̲nādu has a very sophisticated place among the devotees. Every day, this cult is reforming variety of practices, to help the spiritual seekers through their inward journey. Many of these practices such as meditation and other types of *yōga* can be adapted to other religions. Even though this cult was separated and isolated for sometimes, it still has a common belief that prevails among the devotees for their liberation. Some people are more engaged in the activities like "getting and accumulating" the wealth or achieving the fame and power. Basically these people seek happiness through physical pleasure or sensual pleasure. Most of them believe that the sensual pleasures of eating, drinking, sex, and

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[510] M.D. Muthukumaraswamy, *Op.cit*., pp. 3-4.

[511] Braj Ranjan Mani, *Op.cit.*, pp. 158-159.

physical comforts are the best and real way to achieve happiness. From the outset of human civilization, man has been on a religious quest. It seems that religion also found to be as old as humanity itself. At present, the vast majority of the people in the world continue to follow their religion for their successful life[512]. When the people get disappointed, when they lost their confidence, they need one super power to solve their problem. Whey they are approaching the god, there is a distance/differences like god and devotees. But when they are approaching the Siddhas, there are some similarities that both are living or lived in the society; they are all one among the people. Since they are in human form, it is easy to the people, who are in some problems to approach those Siddhas and get some solutions.

[512] Joseph Stoutzenberger, *Op.cit*, pp. 165, 266

Historical Continuity of the Siddha Cult in Tamil̲nādu





Fig.163, Siddha Pulasthiyar Worshipped Here. Abirāmi Temple, Tirukadavur,TN.

Fig.164, Vibasitthu Mun̲i and Rōmariṣi Viruthagiriswara Koil, Virudhachalam



Fig.165, A Siddha, Chin̲n̲agāndhipuram, Pal̲an̲i Tāluk, T.N





Fig.166, Karuvūr Siddha Shrine, Brahadīsvara temple, Tañjāvūr, TN


Fig.167, Pāmbāṭṭi Siddhar Cave, Maruthamalai, Coimbatore, T.N.


Fig.168, Terracotta Images of Siddhas, Foot Hills of Poṉṉimalai,TN


Fig.169, *Samādhi* of the Poṉṉimalai Siddhar, on the top of the Poṉṉi Hills, Paḻaṉi, TN



Fig.170, Meikaṇdār Siddhar Cave and *Jīva Samādhi*, Kaṉṉivādi, Dindugal, T.N



Fig.171, Koṅgaṇa Siddha's Cave & Seṭṭi Thambirān *Jīva Samādhi*, Kāṅkēyam, TN



Fig.172, Siddha Paṭṭiṇathār Temple, Tiruvotṛiyūr, Chennai, Tamiḻnādu.



Fig.173, Virupākśa Cave, Tiruvaṇṇamalai, Ramaṇa stayed here during 1899 - 1916



Fig.174, Skanda Āśram,Tiruvaṇṇāmalai, TN Ramaṇa stayed here 7 years, 1916 -1922



Fig.175, Sri Māṉūr Siddhar *Jīva Samādhi*, 2008, Māṉūr, Paḻaṉi, TN



Fig.176, Rāmasāmi Siddhar-Pāppāthi Ammāl *Jīva Samādhi*, Pan̲drimalai, Dindigul





Fig.177, Śri Jyōthi Moun̲a Nirvāṇa Swāmy *Jīva Samādhi*, Kasavaṇapaṭṭi, Dindigul, TN



Fig.178, Guru Rāmasāmy Siddhar *Jīva Samādhi*, Kaṉṉivādi, Dindigul, T.N



Fig.179, Gōrakha Siddha *Jīva Samādhi*, Vadakku Poigai Nallūr, Nāgapaṭṭiṇam, TN



Fig.180, Ascetics staying here and used to beg for their food only at night in the village



Fig.181, Sadai Sāmy & Kaṇṇādi Sāmy *Jīva Samādhi*, Foot hills, Tiruvaṇṇāmalai,TN



Fig.182, Śeśadhri Sāmy Āśram; images of Siddhas installed inside. Tiruvaṇṇāmalai, TN



Fig.183, Vitobānanda *Jīva Samādhi*, Kadalādi & His Cave on hilltop of Parvathamalai



Fig.184, Veṭṭaveli Siddhar *Jīva Samādhi*, Ālpet, Cuddalore, TN



Fig.185,*Yōgasāla*, Lower Ahobilam, A.P. Fig.186,Siddha Kaduveli, Irumbai, T.N.

Celebrated Siddha Shrines/*Samādhis* in Puduchērry



Fig.187, Sāmy Siddhānanda *Jīva Samādhi*, Karuvadikuppam, Puduchērry, 19th c



Fig. 188, Śri Rāmaparadēsi Siddhar *Jīva Samādhi*, Villianūr, Puduchērry (19th c)



Fig.189, Vaṇṇrapradesi Sāmigaḷ *Samādhi*, Odiyampet, Puduchērry

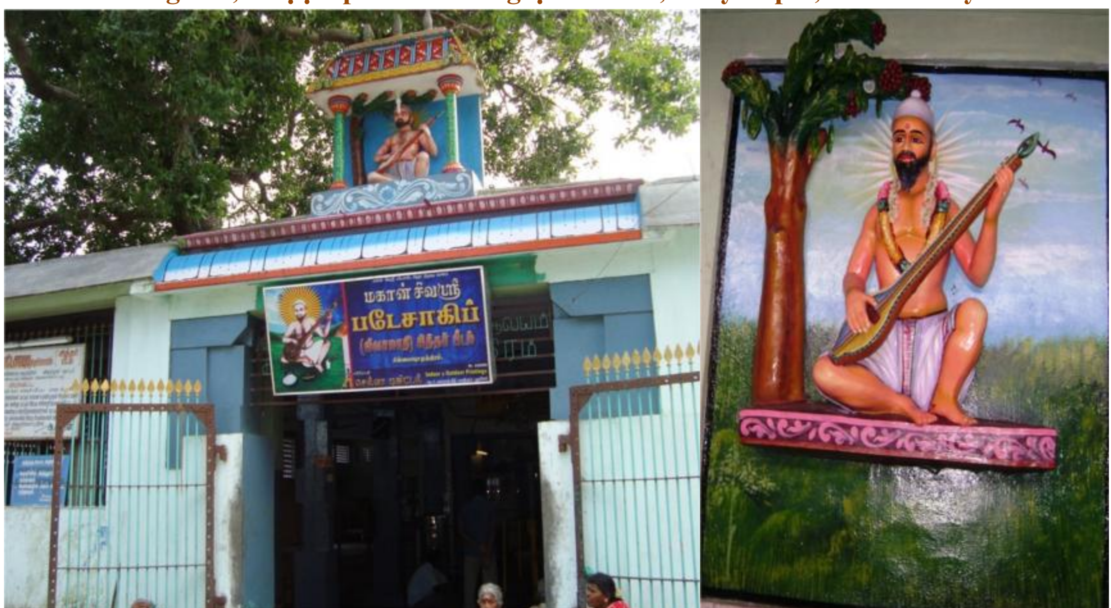


Fig.190, Mahāṉ Bade Sāhib *Jīva Samādhi*, Chiṉṉabābu Samudram, near Puduchērry

Fig.191,A**ḻ**agar Siddhar *Samādhi* Shrine & offerings to him, Teṉṉampākkam Village,PY



Fig.192, Śri Thēṅgāi Sāmy Siddhar *Jīva Samādhi*, near Sultānpēt, Puduchērry



Fig.193, Śri Dakśiṇāmūrthy Siddhar *Jīva Samādhi*, Thennal, Puduchērry

Historical Continuity: Some Siddhas(?) of contemporary period



Fig.194, A Siddha, Āranmula, Kēraḷā   **Fig.195, A Siddha at Kāñchi Kāmātchi Temple**



Figs.196,197 & 198 - Siddha like ascetics in the temple of Tiruvaṇṇāmalai,TN





Fig.199, A Siddha at Tiruvaṇṇāmalai, TN Fig.200, Agattiyar (as called by the people)





Fig.201, Siddha Duruvāsa (as he told) Fig.202, Siddhars at Parvathamalai

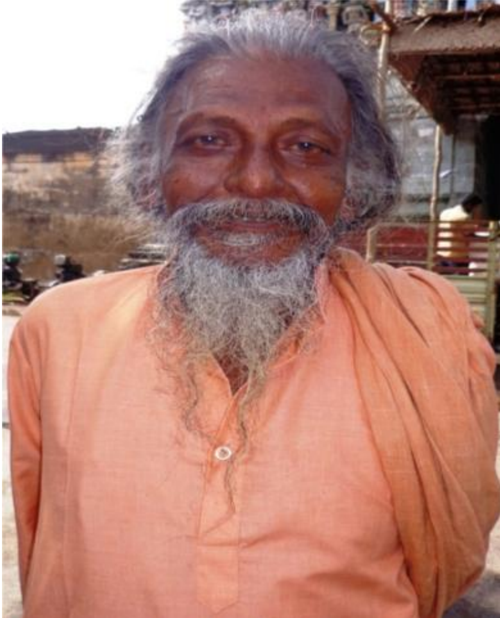




Fig.203, Pāṭṭu Siddhar Nārāyaṇasāmy, Sīkāḻi Fig.204, Śri Mōṉa Siddhar,Chetthavarai,Senji

DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

Fig. 164: This is found in the temple premises of Viruthagirīśvara temple at Virudhāchalam. In this, along with other minor deities, the images of Śri Vibhasithu Muṉi and Rōmariṣi is depicted as his right hand is in *varadha mudrā*, found with long ears, wearing *rudrākṣamāla*, etc.

Fig. 165: This isolated sculpture is found in Chiṉṉagāndhipuram village of Paḻaṉi tāluk, Dindigul dist.,Tamiḻnādu. Devotees refer to this sculpture as that of Siddha Bōgar who came here to prepare herbal medicines. He is seated in a *lalitāsana* pose, his left hand in *lōla-hasta mudrā* and his right hand is *chin mudrā*.

Fig. 166: This is the shrine dedicated to Siddha Karuvūrār in the Brahadīśvara temple, Tañjāvūr. It is obviously a later addition located behind the sanctum of Brahadīśvara temple complex of Tañjāvūr. Inside this shrine, a statue of Siddha Karuvūrār seated in a *siddhāsana* pose is installed and is offered daily worship by the devotees. It is an open shrine without any doors.

Fig. 167: A separate shrine is dedicated to Siddha Pāmbāṭṭi in the premises of Marudhamalai Murugaṉ temple, Coimbatore dist., about 12 kilometers from the town of Coimbatore. This is located on the hilltop to the east of the main shrine and one have to go down the steps to reach this cave shrine. It is said that for many years Siddha Pāmbāṭṭi stayed here and performed miracles. Inside this cave, a big stone is found in a snake like structure adjacent to the mountain rocks. A *liṅga* is installed along with other minor Nāga stones. More number of devotees are offering daily worshiping here.

Fig.168: These terracotta images are said to be those of the Siddhars who stayed and prepared their herbal medicines here. It is located (before 4 kms) under the foot hills of Poṉṉimalai, which is nearer to the Āyakudi village, Paḻaṉi *tāluk*, Dindigul dist., Tamiḻnādu. Besides, under the sanctum of the temple, many terracotta Figures of such ascetics in miniature size are excavated at the time of its renovation.

Fig. 169: This is said to be the *samādhi* of Poṉṉimalai Siddhar, a disciple of Bōgar of Paḻaṉi. It is found in the top of the Poṉṉi hills. Along with this, many other stones are also installed and said to be the burials (*jīva samādhis*) of other Siddhars who attained *Samādhi* here. This hilltop is very difficult to access (in 2009). The size of the bricks (40 cms long) found on the top of the hill indicate that they could be of some antiquity. Once in a year, the *gurupūjā* is observed here. However, for the past five more years, no one worshipped here due to the difficulty of climbing this mountain. Therefore devotees limited their worship up to the above said temple (Fig.168) under the foothills of Poṉṉimalai. (However, some arrangements were made to access this hilltop from its western side in 2013).

Fig. 170: This cave like structure is found in the middle of the hills, which is located some two kilometres to the west of the Kaṉṉivādi village in Dindigul dist. It is said

that Meikaṇdār Siddhar along with other Siddhars like Bōgar of Pa<u>l</u>a<u>n</u>i, were engaged in preparing the herbal medicines here. He did penance in this cave and attained *samādhi* here. A shrine with a *liṅga* installed inside the cave is said to be his *samādhi*. Rarely devotees visit this place. Annual *gurupūjā* is also celebrated to him.

Fig. 171: This is located in inside of the forest on the Kāṅkēyam-Pa<u>l</u>a<u>n</u>i road, from Coimbatore. It is said that Koṅgaṇa Siddha did penance in this cave. Next to this, is the *jīva samādhi* of a local Siddha named Seṭṭi Thambiran. He healed many with his herbal medicines. He stayed and prepared medicines and attained *samādhi* here.

Fig.172: This shrine is dedicated to Siddha Pattiṇathār who attained *samādhi* here. It is located near the seashore of Tiruvotṛiyūr near Chennai. Inside this premises, *samādhis* of few other Siddhas are also found. Devotees are visiting here daily and chanting the mantras here.

Fig.173: This is the inner view of the Virupākśa cave, located some hundred meters above, in the Tiruvaṇṇāmalai hills. In this cave, Ramaṇa Mahaṛiṣi stayed from 1899 to 1916.

Fig.174: Skanda *Āśram* is located few hundred meters away from the Virupākśa cave. Here Ramaṇa stayed for seven years from 1916 to 1922. This place is now under the care of the Ramaṇāśram trust.

Fig.175: This is the *jīva samādhi* of one Mānūr Siddhar. He is named after this location, where he stayed and attained his *samādhi* in this Mānūr village. This *Samādhi* shrine is located on the highway from the Mānūr village to Pa<u>l</u>a<u>n</u>i. But he is not as much popular as other Siddhars and very few people know him.

Fig. 176: Pa<u>n</u>ṛimalai village is located on the hills leading to Tha<u>n</u>ṛikudi in Dindigul dist. This village in the hill range seems to be in existence from the medieval period onwards, where the *maṇdapas* and remnants of post Vijayanagara period are found. In the middle of the village, a *samādhi* shrine of Pa<u>n</u>ṛimalai Siddhar (as he is popularly known) is located. His real name is Rāmasāmy, he attained his *samādhi* on 24.04.1906 and along with him, and his wife Pāppāthi Ammāl also attained *samādhi* on 12.08.1965. The shrine is under the care of their close relatives. It is said that both displayed miraculous powers.

Fig. 177: This *samādhi* of Jothi Mou<u>n</u>a Nirvāṇa Sāmy is located in the Kasavaṇapaṭṭi village in the Dindigul dist. This Siddha always moved around nude and only accepted the cigarettes. He performed many miracles in this village; because of which the devotees constructed the big shrine and a *maṇdapa* after he attained *samādhi*. The person who appears in the picture with ochre dress is the disciple of this Siddha, who is taking care of the house, where the Siddha stayed and attained *samādhi*.

Fig. 178: This is the *jīva samādhi* of Guru Rāmasāmy Siddhar of Ka<u>n</u><u>n</u>ivādi village of Dindigul dist. The *samādhi* shrine is located near the village bus stop. He is popular in

this village. Often *pūjās* and other oblation are conducted here. He was lived and attained his *samādhi* in this place.

Fig. 179: This is said to be the *jīva samādhi* of Gōrakha Siddhar. It is located in the Vadakku Poigai Nallur village of Nāgapattiṇam. Recently a big *maṇdapa* was built in which ascetics from different parts are coming and staying. In the entrance of this temple, the eighteen Tamil Siddhar images were installed.

Fig. 180: Devotees and ascetics from various parts are coming and staying here. They go for begging around the village once a day in night time. For that they used to carry the staff in their shoulder which is tied with ochre cloths on its two sides, as shown in the picture.

Fig. 181: Around the foothills of Tiruvaṇṇāmalai, there are thousands of *samādhis*, said to be the *jīva samādhis* of the Siddhas who lived there. The *samādhi* of Sadai Sāmy and Kaṇṇādi Sāmy as shown in here which are located in the premises of Śēśādri Sāmy *Āśram* next to the Ramaṇāśram.

Fig. 182: This is the Śēśādri Sāmy *Āśram* located in Tiruvaṇṇāmalai in which the statues of Popular Siddhas of Tamiḻnādu are installed.

Fig. 183: This is the *jīva samādhi* of Sāmy Vitobānanda of Parvathamalai. It is located in outstretch of Kadalādi village, on the way to the Parvathamalai of Tiruvaṇṇāmalai dist. Next to this, is the picture of the *āśram* of Sāmy Vitobānanda, located on the hilltop of Parvathamalai. Now this *āśram* is under construction, and it is constructed on the cave where Sāmy Vitobānanda stayed and performed penance. Few feet towards its north, is the temple dedicated to Mallikārjuna and Brahmaramba as the replica of Śrisailam.

Fig. 184: This is the *jīva samādhi* of Vettaveli Siddhar. It is located on the southern bank of the River South Pennār at Ālpet nearer to the ECR road of Cuddalore. Though this shrine is a recent one, the *samādhi* may be more than 100 years old.

Fig. 185: This is a painting of a *Sādhaka* seated in a *siddhāsana* depicting the *sat-cakras* of the human body as indicated earlier in Fig. 139. It is found (in 2009) at the *yogasāla* near the Bāla Narasimha temple, on the way to the Chatravada Narasimha temple at Lower Ahobilam. But by 2012, this *yogasāla* was demolished and a new shrine for *Navagraha* Narasimha was constructed.

Fig. 186: This image of Kaduveli Siddhar is found in front of the Amman shrine of the Irumbai Mahākāḷēśvara temple near Puduchērry. He is depicted in a Siddhāsana pose exactly in the same way as depicted above in Fig. 185.

Fig. 187: This is the *jīva samādhi* of Sāmy Siddhānanda, the most celebrated Siddha of Puduchērry. It is located near the cremation ground of Karuvadikuppam. This shrine belongs to the 19^{th} century. Here the national poet Mahākavi Subramaṇi Bharathi stayed and wrote poems on this siddha. There is a separate statue installed

for this poet inside this shrine. Day by day, this shrine is attaining importance and attracting more number of devotees. At present, addition and renovation works are going on.

Fig. 188: This is the *samādhi* shrine of Śri Rāmaparadēsi Siddhar. It is located on the Villupuram-Puduchērry highway in Villiaṉūr. Recently, a big *maṇdapa* is constructed on the *samādhi* and it is also attracting more number of devotees.

Fig. 189: This is the *samādhi* shrine of Śri Vaṇṇāraparadēsi Siddhar, located in the Odiyampattu village of Puduchērry. Recently a *maṇdapa* is constructed on this *samādhi* and it attracts good number of devotees.

Fig. 190: This is the *jīva samādhi* of Mahān Badē Sāhib, a Sūfi siddha, who later assimilated into Śaivism by the devotees who added him the agnomen of '*Śiva Śri'* as prefix. Like Siddhānanda temple, this *samādhi* shrine is also attracting thousands of devotees every Thursday and less than hundred daily. Devotees are coming and staying here for getting relief from their diseases.

Fig. 191: This is the *jīva samādhi* of Aḻagar Siddhar. This *samādhi* shrine is located in the midst of the tamarind groove in the Theṉṉampākkam village near Ēmbalam of Puduchērry. There is a belief that devotees those who wants child, or their children's education, health etc. they should have to offer a statue of a girl or boy to this Siddha. Thus their desires get fulfils after some weeks. Therefore, one can see here hundreds of such concrete statues of human Figures.

Fig. 192: This is the *jīva samādhi* of Thēṅgāi Sāmy Siddhar. It is located in front of the Arumbarthapuram electric substation, on the Puduchērry-Villupuram highway. Recently, foundation was laid and works are also in progress on construction of a new *Samādhi* shrine and *maṇdapa* here.

Fig.193: This is the *samādhi* shrine of Dakśiṇāmūrthy Siddhar. It is located in a cemetery ground nearer to the Villupuram-Puduchērry highway in the Thennal village of Puduchērry. Recently foundation stone is laid for constructing a *maṇdapa* and pillars are also erected in front of this *samādhi*.

Fig.194: He is a living Siddha living in the Āranmula temple of Kēraḷā. He is found with long matted hair, *rudrākṣamāla* in his neck and wearing ochre dress. (But he refused to be photographed).

Fig.195: This is the photograph of a Siddha (taken in 2011) in a white garment immersed in meditation in the Kāmātchi Amman temple at Kāñcipuram. He is found with long hair and beard. But nothing is known about him. (He refused to respond). The local devotees also know him since a long time but they do not know his personal details.

Fig.196, 197 and 198 are the Siddha like ascetics living in the Aruṇāchalēśvara temple at Tiruvaṇṇāmalai. They are addressing themselves as Siddhas and offering

the sacred ashes (*vibhūti*) to the devotees who approach them, but expecting money. But many of the features found in the medieval sculptures like long matted hair, beard, *rudrākṣamāla*, and copper ring in their wrist etc. are also found in them which shows the continuity of that tradition.

Fig.199: He is wandering in the Tiruvaṇṇamalai hills. He is found with matted hair and covered his body with red-ochre cloth. People are calling him a Siddhar.

Fig.200: He is called Siddha Agastya by the people by referring to his shape and size. He is wandering inside the Tiruvaṇṇāmalai temple. Most of his appendages and attributes like *rudrākṣamāla* and copper ring in his (right) wrist resemble the medieval sculptures. (See also Fig. 196-198, 201, 204)

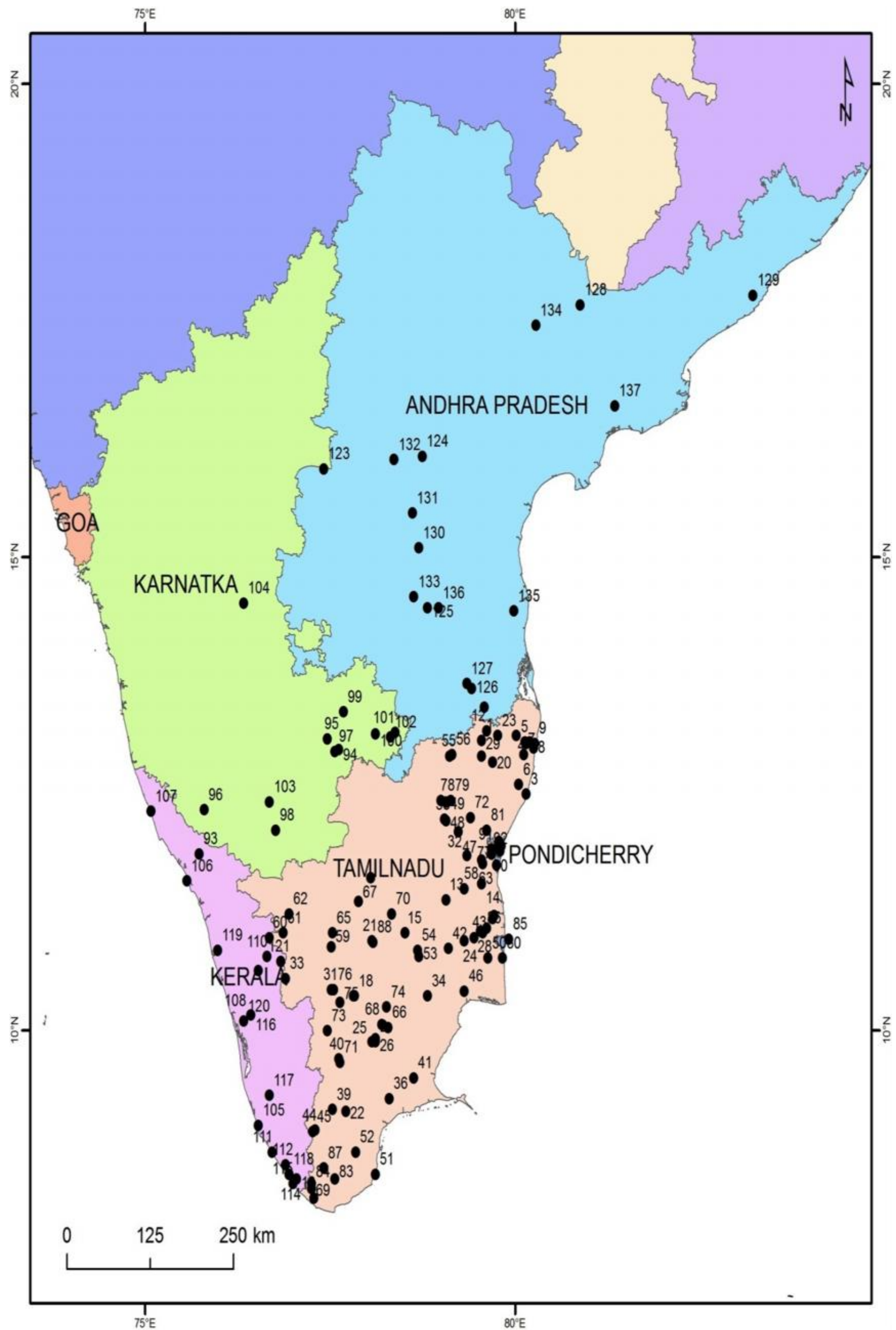
Fig.201: He introduced himself as a Siddha Durvāsa. He is wandering in the streets of Tiruvaṇṇāmalai, but he is the native of Puduchērry. His words are more philosophical, ferocious, true to his name of the legendary sage '*Dūrvasa*' known for his tantrums. Among his other attributes, he is wearing a copper bangle in his right wrist.

Fig.202: These are the Siddha like ascetics seated all along the ways leading to the Parvathamalai. Besides them many of the similar ascetics found in all the celebrated *Siddha-kśētras* like Veḷḷiaṅgiri, Paḻaṉi, Tiruvaṇṇāmalai, Kollimalai, Kañcamalai, Saduragiri, Chidambaram, etc.

Fig.203: He is known as the Pāṭṭu Siddhar. His real name is Nārāyaṇasāmy. He is living in Sīrkāḻi town and often found in the Saṭṭaināthar temple at Sīrkāḻi.

Fig.204: He is Śri Jōthi Mōṉa Siddhar, presently established his *āśram* at the foothills of Chethavarai village near Señji. He is offering sacred ashes and lemon fruits to the devotees who approach him with problems. Along with him, some of his disciples are also staying here. As a part of their tradition he is wearing a copper bangle in his wrist exactly in the same manner as shown in the sculptural representations. (see also Fig. 201)

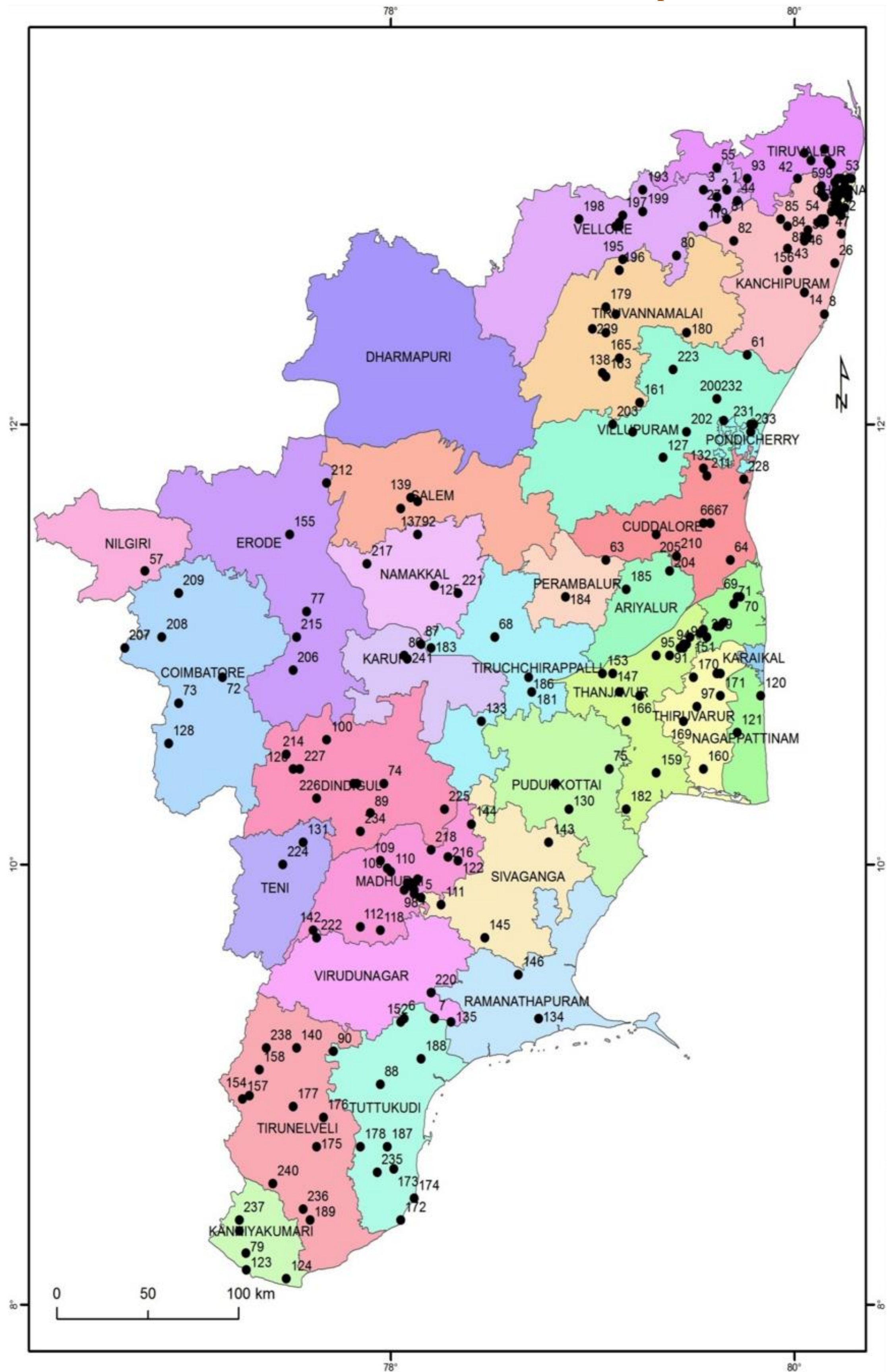
MAP – 1: Distribution of Celebrated Siddha Centres in the parts of South India



Legend for the Map of south India

1 Narasiṅgapuram
2 Aruppukōṭṭai
3 Kalpākkam
4 Vadapaḻaṉi
5 Pūnamallī
6 Tirukaḻukuṉṛam
7 Mādampākkam
8 Tiruvāṇmiyūr
9 Mylāpūr
10 Tiruniṉḏṛavūr
11 Tirumullaivāyil
12 Tiruthaṉi
13 Chidambaram
14 Vadalūr
15 Tiruvāvaduturai
16 Sīrkāḻi
17 Vaithīśvaran Kōil
18 Kasavaṇampaṭṭi
19 Kaḷiyakkāviḷai
20 Kāñchipuram
21 Karūr
22 Kaḻugumalai (Kōvilpaṭṭi)
23 Tiruvalaṅgādu (Kumbakōṇam)
24 Swāmimalai
25 Tiruparaṅkuṉṛam
26 Madurai
27 Siddharkādu (Mayilāduturai)
28 Māthirimaṅgalam
29 Vadakku Poikai Nallūr
30 Nāgapaṭṭiṇam
31 Paḻaṉi
32 Tiruveṉṉainallūr
33 Vēṭṭaikāranputhūr (Pollāchi)
34 Pudukōṭṭai
35 Rājapāḷayam
36 Rāmēśvaram
37 Kañjamalai (Salem)
38 Skanḏāśramam (Salem)
39 Saṅkaran Kōil
40 Thāṇipāṛai (Sathuragiri)
41 Śrivilliputhūr
42 Tiruvaiyāṛu
43 Tiruvidaimaruthūr
44 Tenkāsi
45 Kutṛālam
46 Paṭṭukōṭṭai
47 Vēṭṭavalam
48 Tiruvaṇṇāmalai
49 Pūṇḍi
50 Tiruvārūr
51 Tiruchendūr
52 Vallanādu (Tirunelvēli)
53 Trichy
54 Śri Raṅgam
55 Vēlūr
56 Viriñjipuram
57 Mailam
58 Viruthāchalam
59 Ūthiyūr (Coimbatore)
60 Veḷḷiaṅgiri
61 Marudamalai
62 Kāramadai
63 Tiruvathigai
64 Kaṉṉivādi
65 Śivaṉmalai (Erōde)
66 Ariṭṭāpaṭṭi
67 Tiruchenkōdu
68 Āḻagarkōil
69 Tiruvaṭṭāṛu
70 Kollimalai
71 Sathuragiri
72 Chettavarai
73 Thēṉi
74 Paṉṛimalai
75 Tandikudi
76 Āyakudi
77 Mañjakuppam
78 Parvathamalai
79 Mēlmaruvathūr
80 Irumbai
81 Mailam
82 Moratāṇḏi
83 Tirukkuruṅgudi
84 Tiruparappu
85 Pērūr
86 Maruthur
87 Puthēri
88 Thāṉthōṉṛimalai (Karūr)
89 Karuvadi Kuppam
90 Puduchērry
91 Chiṉṉa Bābu Samudram
92 Nallāthūr
93 Kōrkādu
94 Ulsūr, Bangalore
95 Soḻadēvanahalli
96 Kudagumalai (Coorg)
97 Kalāsipāḷayam
98 Nañjangudu
99 Nandi
100 Kōlār
101 Mulabāgal
102 Āvaṇi
103 Tipu Palace
104 Jagalūr
105 Edapaḷḷykōṭṭa
106 Vadakarā
107 Kañjankādu
108 Kāladi
109 Ālathūr
110 Pālakkād
111 Varkāla
112 Cheṅkōṭṭukōṇam
113 Thycāud
114 Erithavūr – Balarāmapuram
115 Viḻiñjam
116 Kālady
117 Āranmula
118 Tiruvanaṉthapuram
119 Tirunāvāi
120 Āluvā
121 Koḻiñjampāṛai
122 Nārāyaṇavaṉam
123 Mantrālayam
124 Śrisailam
125 Kadapa
126 Tirupathi
127 Tirumala
128 Baḍhrāchalam
129 Simhāchalam
130 Ahōbilam
131 Mahānandhi
132 Siddhēśvaram
133 Chidipirala
134 Vutukūru
135 Nellūr
136 Siddhavatam
137 Siddhāpuram

MAP-2: Distribution of Celebrated Siddha Centres in the parts of Tamilnādu

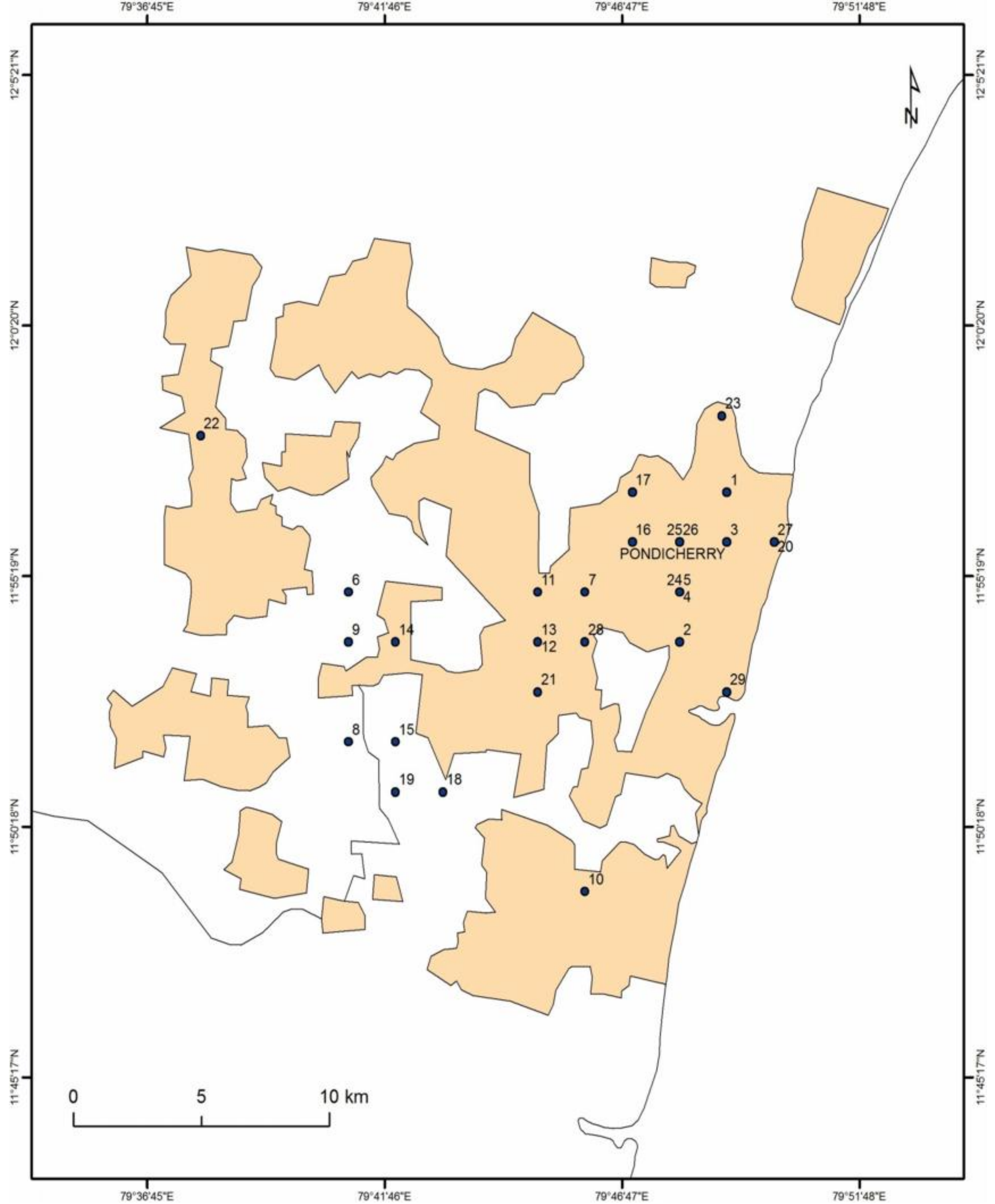


Legend for the Map of Tamiḻnādu

1 Sirunāmalli
2 Nāgavīdu
3 Narasiṅgapuram
4 Aruppukōṭṭai
5 Puliyūr
6 Vēmbūr
7 Vadakku Natham
8 Kalpākkam
9 Ambattūr
10 Vadapaḻaṉi
11 Rājakīḻpākkam
12 Aḻiñjivākkam
13 Pūṉamallī
14 Tirukaḻukuṉṛam
15 Vēlachērry
16 Perambūr
17 Guindy
18 Ālandūr
19 Kōdambākkam
20 Kaṇḍanchāvadi
21 Kṛiśnāmpēt
22 KK Nagar
23 Mādampākkam
24 Chitlapākkam
25 Tiruvāṇmiyūr
26 Tirupōrūr
27 Nemili
28 Nuṅgambākkam
29 Chētpat
30 Pachaiappa College
31 Eḻumbūr (Egmore)
32 Purasaivākkam
33 Tiru.Vi.Ka.Nagar
34 Vyāsarpādi
35 Rāyapuram
36 Thōṇḍiārpēt
37 Mount Road, Cheṉṉai
38 Villivākkam
39 Red Hills
40 Rāyapēṭṭah
41 Mylāpūr
42 Tiruniṉḍṛavūr
43 Gūduvāñchērry
44 Thakkōlam
45 Peruṅgulathūr
46 Maṉṉivākkam
47 Naṅganallūr
48 Vepēry
49 Kāranōdai
50 Perambūr
51 Sembiam
52 Kolathūr Peravalūr
53 Erukañchēri
54 Tirumullaivāyil
55 Tirutaṉi
56 Ūrapākkam
57 Āṉandāśramam
58 Padinallur
59 Alamādhi
60 Cheṉṉai
61 Ōṅgūr
62 Saidāpēt
63 Chidambaram
64 Sabānāyagar Street
65 Tirukālar
66 Vadalūr
67 Vaḷḷalār nagar
68 Tiruvāvaduturai
69 Sīrkāḻi
70 Teṉpāthi
71 Vaitheeswaran Koil
72 Pūrāndan Pāḷayam
73 Puravipāḷayam, Pollāchi
74 Dindugal
75 Puthupaṭṭi
76 Kasavaṇampaṭṭi
77 Sennimalai
78 Gōvindapuram
79 Kaḷiyakkāviḷai
80 Kalavai
81 Gōvindavādi
82 Kāñchipuram
83 Appūr
84 Veḷḷārai village
85 Śriperumbudūr
86 Karūr
87 Nērūr
88 Paśuvanthaṉai
89 Ūthupaṭṭi
90 Kaḻugumalai
91 Kumbakōṇam
92 Āthanūr
93 Tiruvalaṅgādu
94 Tirupuvaṉam
95 Swāmimalai
96 Āduthuṛai
97 Kūnthalūr
98 Tiruparaṅkuṉṛam
99 Madurai
100 K.Rengāpāḷayam
101 Kākkāthōppu
102 Simmakkal
103 Avaṇiyāpuram
104 Āṇḍāḷpuram
105 Kalavāsal
106 Gōripāḷayam
107 Katha Kiṉaṛu
108 Tiruvēdagam
109 Chōḻavandān
110 Kodimaṇgalam
111 Tirupuvaṇam
112 T.Kallupaṭṭi
113 Kūrainādu
114 Mayilāduturai
115 Siddharkādu
116 Māthirimaṅgalam
117 Kuthālam
118 Vadakkan Paṭṭi
119 Vadakku Poikai Nallūr
120 Nagapatinam
121 Ettukudi
122 Melur
123 Maṇḍaikādu
124 Swāmithōppu
125 Thattagiri
126 Paḻaṉi
127 Tiruvennainallūr
128 Vēṭṭaikāranputhūr
129 Pudukōṭṭai
130 Aṛimaḻam Village
131 Vadukapaṭṭi
132 Rājapāḷayam
133 Sathirapaṭṭi
134 Ekkākudi near Utharakōsamaṅgai
135 Rāmēśwaram
136 Salem
137 Kañjamalai
138 Skandāśramam
139 Jagirammapāḷayam
140 Saṅkaran Kōil
141 Paṉaiyūr
142 Thāṇipāṛai
143 Kōṭṭayūr

144 Siṅgampuṉari
145 Māṉamadurai
146 Śrivilliputhūr
147 Tiruvaiyāṛu
148 Pūṇdi (Tañjāvūr)
149 Tiruvidaimaruthūr
150 Muḻiyār
151 Kañjanūr
152 Karanthai
153 Kaduveli
154 Tenkāsi
155 Tirumalaikōil
156 Pranūr
157 Kutṛālam
158 Kadayanallūr
159 Paṭṭukoṭṭai
160 Tillaiviḷāgam
161 Vēṭṭavalam
162 Avalūrpēṭṭai
163 Tiruvaṇṇāmalai
164 Pōlūr
165 Pūṇdi (Tiruvaṇṇāmalai)
166 Puthūr (Tiruvārūr)
167 Naṉṉilam
168 Sanna Nallur
169 Maṇṇārkudi
170 Seṅgalipuram
171 Tiruvārūr
172 Kulasēkarapatṇam
173 Eral
174 Tiruchendūr
175 Pēṭṭai
176 Paḻamadai
177 Nettūr
178 Vallanādu
179 Athimūr
180 Dēsūr
181 Trichy
182 Piṉṉa Vāsal
183 Kāṭṭuputhūr
184 Perambalūr
185 Senthuṛai
186 Śri Raṅgam
187 Mudivaithānēndal
188 Vilāthikuḷam
189 Vaḷḷiyūr
190 Nallān Paṭṭaṛai
191 Saidāpēt
192 Vēlūr Cantt
193 Vaḷḷimalai
194 Vēlūr
195 Kaṇṇamaṅgalam
196 Thāṅgal
197 Kāṅgēyanallūr
198 Pasumāthūr
199 Tiruvallam
200 Mailam
201 Tiruvakarai
202 Tiruvāmāthūr
203 Tirukōilūr
204 Āṇdimaḍam
205 Viruthāchalam
206 Ūthiyūr
207 Veḷḷiaṅgiri
208 Marudamalai
209 Kāramadai
210 Śrimuśṇam
211 Tiruvathigai
212 Tirumāṇikuḻi
213 Kaṉṉivādi
214 Māṉūr
215 Śivaṉmalai
216 Aritāpaṭṭi
217 Tirucheṅkōdu
218 Aḻagarkōil
219 Tiruvaṭṭāṛu
220 Reddiāpaṭṭi
221 Kollimalai
222 Sathuragiri
223 Chettavarai
224 Thēṉi
225 Paṉṛimalai
226 Tāndikudi
227 Āyakudi
228 Mañjakuppam
229 Parvathamalai
230 Auroville
231 Irumbai
232 Mailam
233 Moratāṇdi
234 Nilakōṭṭai
235 Āḻvar Tirungari
236 TirukkuruṅgKudi
237 Tiruparappu
238 Puḷiyaṅkudi
239 Maruthūr
240 Puthēri
241 Thāṉthōṉṛimalai

MAP-3: Distribution of Celebrated Siddha Centres in Puduchērry Region



Legend for the Puduchērry Map

1 Puduchērry
2 Karuvadi Kuppam
3 Sithankudi
4 Kāramaṇikuppam
5 Ellaipiḷḷaichāvadi
6 Chiṉṉa Bābu Samudram
7 Arumāthapuram
8 Nallāthūr
9 Kaṇḍamaṅgalam
10 Piḷḷaiyārkuppam

11 Sultāṉpēt
12 Villianur
13 Kaṉuvāpēt
14 Ariyūr
15 Ēmbalam
16 Kathirkāmam
17 Gōrimēdu
18 Kambalikārankupam
19 Thennampākkam
20 Vaithikuppam
21 Tirukāñji

22 Sōmpaṭṭu (Maṉṉādipaṭṭu)
23 Bommiyārpāḷayam
24 Mudaliārpēt
25 Pākkamudaiyāṉpēt
26 Satyānagar
27 Maṇakuḷa Viṉāyagar Temple
28 Odiyampaṭṭu
29 Vīrāmpaṭṭiṇam

Chapter V

CONCLUSION

The Tamiḻ Siddhas variously described as atheist, anti-casteists, anti-establishment and radical, gained immense popularity amongst all sections of the society through their literary compositions, some of which became household names for their preaching about morals, simple life and teaching many complex philosophical issues in a lucid language focusing on the do’s and don’ts in everyday life of a common man. Their religious ideas and philosophical tenets, rituals and practices were also presented in the simplest possible language which even a layman can read and understand but the shrouded inner meaning can only be unveiled by those who are familiar with the mythology, ritualistic methods and practices of various sectarian faiths such as *Śaivism, Śaktism* and above all *Tāntrism*. Their contribution for the social cohesion and communal harmony can also be juxtaposed with their contributions to alchemical medicine and surgery. The *Siddha Vaidyam* is aimed towards the building up of an ageless and strong physical body (*Siddha-dēha*) through which they attained *jīvan mukti*.

Thus, they are not only striving to eradicate social maladies such as caste, communal and gender distinctions, religious dogmos and meaningless rituals, but also curing the mundane physical ailments such that he/she can become the personification of physical and mental strength useful to work for the common well-being.

Belonging to the popular genre of regional identity, the Tamiḻ Siddhas were projected as the symbols of Tamiḻ glory. But except their linguistic style which is the spoken language of the masses, their ideas, theoretical concepts, methods and practices are part of a pan-Indian complex whole which included *Vēdic*, *avaidic*, *yōgic* and *tāntric* elements of diverse sectarian faiths.

Although they are mentioned as a group of ‘eighteen’, there was no single established list and we have Siddhas grouped under ‘nine’ and ‘eighteen’ (*Navanāthas* and *Pathiṉeṇ Siddhars*). Those who wrote on the Tamiḻ Siddha groups included the sacred sites, the local spiritual masters as well as those part of the pan-Indian traditions. Even those Nāthas and Siddhas of the pan-Indian traditions (Minanātha and Gorakṣanatha for example), were Tamilised and credited with an

extensive literary contribution in Tamil, whereas they are credited with many works in Sanskrit in their places of origin, the Eastern India.

Coming to the native Tami<u>l</u> Siddhas themselves both in the traditions of *Navanāthas* and *Pathi<u>n</u>eṇ Siddhas*, more than two of them have the same name who can be differentiated by a critical analysis of their literary style and expression. To cite a few of the popular names such as Agastiyar, Paṭṭiṇathar, Avvaiyār, Pulipāṇi, Karuvūrār etc., whose literary contributions were critically studied and analysed reveal that they belonged to different individuals of the some names. Because of this reason, the chronology of the Tami<u>l</u> Siddhas remained a hotly debated one, which is said to have begun from a very remote past of the pre-Mauryan era in dynastic terms to as late as the 17^{th}-18^{th} centuries C.E., and beyond.

Thus, the history of the Tami<u>l</u> Siddhas extending over a period of nearly 2300 years is glorified as one of the glorious epochs of Tami<u>l</u> civilization which preached equality, rationalism, brotherhood, communal harmony, social awakening, and practical methods of physical and mental awakening. But as seen in the previous chapters the Tami<u>l</u> Siddhas at any point of their long history extending over two millennia identified themselves as part of the "Tami<u>l</u> Culture". Their preaching consisting of *yōga sādhana* such as *yōgāsanas*, *siddha-dēha*, mythical principles, rational thinking and outlook, avoidance of dogmatic ideals, are part of their contributions at the mundane level to the society at large.

There are some Siddhas who glorified Śiva, Śakti, Muruga and to some extent Gaṇēśa, as gods *par-excellence* who can be visualised and experienced through variety of *yōgic* exercises and absolute faith, devotion and surrender. They recommended a strong physical body perfected through yogic exercises and invigourised with alchemical drugs (*siddha-dēha*), which as a vehicle can lead the individual to ultimate liberation with in this world (*jīvan mukti*) as opposed to the Brahmanic ideology of *mokṣa* or deliverance. It is the writings of this group of the Tami<u>l</u>/ non-Tami<u>l</u> Siddhas that we have all the elements of *Tāntric* religion given the greatest elaboration.

In the history of medieval South India, the Vijayanagara period marks the consolidation of a plethora of ideas, cults, rituals, sectarian faiths, belief systems and

social institutions culminating in the emergence of a highly standardized and segmented kinship of an egalitarian society consisting of a variety of languages, social and professional groups and highly codified and dogmatic sectarian religions. From such disparate components of social, cultural, economic and religious identity, the institution of temple (which emerged as the greatest contribution of the Bhakti movement in South India of 7^{th}–11^{th} centuries C.E.), becomes an institution itself during the Vijayanagara period which acted as a nerve centre of all activities of the society. It is this institution of temple, through which the ruling and the priestly sections of the society mediated their ideologies and powers, brought about the amalgamation of all the sections of the society into the arena of personal and spiritual elevation and emancipation. The Vijayanagara rulers took up the temple building as a tool and method to consolidate divergent linguistic regions under the ambit of a centralized power. In this process, the sculptural art received great royal patronage which created an elaborate mythology and iconography for all the sectarian groups occupying different parts of the empire.

Among the sculptural productions of the Vijayanagara period, the representation of the Nātha Siddhas and associated *Tāntric* symbolism received very little attention from the scholarly world. Brushed aside as mere decorative motifs, the representations of the Nātha Siddhas, *yōgic* exercises, *tāntric* symbols and iconography offers a virgin area of research.

As discussed in the previous chapters, the Siddha Nātha cult primarily advocating the path of *yōga* can be seen in its embryonic form from the later *Vēdic* times. *Atharvanavēda* is full of magical performances, sorcery, witch-craft, animal sacrifices and so on which were not part of the traditional patriarchal *vēdic* society. The greatest contribution of the ancient Indian wisdom to the humanity at a large is *yōga.* In *tāntrism*, the human body acquires an importance it had never before attained in the spiritual history of India. The body is no longer the source of pain, but the most reliable and effective instrument for conquering death. Since liberation is to be achieved in this life itself (*jīyanmukti*), the body must be preserved as long as possible, and in perfect condition as an aid to meditation[1].Attainment of supernatural powers by having control over breathing and other sensory perceptions became the

[1] Mircea Elliade, *Yoga: immortality and Freedom*, p.227.

corner stone of yogic practice which soon developed into a systamatised whole, permeating from the teacher to the disciple. The teacher who excelled himself as *yōgic* practitioner is divinized and by 9th century C.E., the *Guru-Siśya parampara* of Nātha Siddhas emerged as the most popular sectarian faith of a pan-Indian dimension.

The Nātha Siddha philosophical tenets and ritual practices, absorbed many of their counterparts from such divergent sects as Ajvikas, Pāśupatas, Kāpālikas, Kālamukhas, Buddhist Sahajiyas, Bauls and many other minor belief systems and became a 'syncretic religion' unto itself, yet preserving all such earlier manifestations. By 15th century despite its diminished strength in terms of sectarian literary output, the Nātha-Siddha cult gains much vigour on the popular front entering the folklore, fables, legends and songs of popular genre giving the Nātha Siddha cult a truly pan-Indian colour and character.

The Navanāthas of the Śaivite pantheon and eighty-four Siddhas of the (Vajrayāna) Buddhist pantheon were part of such syncretic religion which profoundly influenced the personal and social life, moral outlook, literature, songs and poetry, religious, philosophical methods and practices and above all the very outlook of the individual in term of introspection. Nātha-Siddha cult with its emphasis on *haṭha-yōga* aimed at elevating the mankind as a whole irrespective of the distinctions of caste, colour, creed, faith, gender and profession. It was in the Nātha Siddha philosophy and cult that we notice the efflorescence of *Tāntrism* in all its strength. *Yōgic* exercises being a part of it, *tāntric* philosophy, ideology and ritualistic practices equated sexual act on par with *yōgic* exercises, thereby allowing the enjoyment of the latent and inherent sexual pleasures also towards attaining the ultimate stage of the *tāntric sādhana* of becoming a *paramahamsa*[2].

As discussed in these previous chapters, the sculptural art of the south Indian temples up to 13th century was more agamic and scriptural in content, consisting of the representation of gods and goddesses only. The establishment of Muslim empires in south India resulted in the decline of the temple building activity on the one hand

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2 In the sculptural art of Śrisailam in Āndhra Pradesh, in one of the representations of sexual act a *hamsa* (swan) is shown symbolically indicating the underlying meaning of the *Kaulācara* sexual ideals. The *tāntric* understanding of sex begins with the full acceptance of the orthodox Hindu presumption of *kāma* for the pursuit of pleasure and a wide variety of magical powers.

and systematic defecation and destruction of existing temples by the invading forces on the other.

The establishment of the Vijayanagara Empire marks a golden age in terms of temple construction, renovation and expansion; phenomenal growth of sculptural iconography; assimilation of diverse sectarian faiths of popular genre into the elite religious philosophy and ritual paraphernalia. As a result we notice the growth of temple cities in every nook and corner of the empire each having its own legendry history and sectarian literary productions. The temples were provided with daily, weekly, fortnightly, monthly, quarterly, half-yearly and annual fairs, festivals and rituals making it the busiest social institution of the contemporary society.

Extending over four linguistic zones of south India, the Vijayanagara Empire made it a royal policy to include in the temple iconography and sculpture, the gods, goddesses religious teachers, mendicants and sages and symbolism of all the sectarian faiths. Tantric iconography represents a religious universe that must be 'entered' and 'assimilated'. This entrance and assimilation are to be understood in the direct meaning of the terms. In meditating an icon, one must first transport oneself to the cosmic plane ruled by that particular divinity and assimilate it with the sacred force of the same visualized within the physical body. The visualization of a divine image is followed by the identification of oneself with that divinity[3].

Although we have stray evidences of their individual sculptural representations of a couple of Nātha-Siddhas in south western Āndhra region, patronization of a Nātha Siddha temple in the Karnātaka region by the Cōḻā emperor and the existence of the Mūlanātha temple at Bāhūr during the pre-Vijayanagara period, the cult of Navanāthas was seems to have become a state religion by the Vijayanagara period. The appearance of the Navanāthas in the Vijayanagara sculptural art marks one of the significant developments in terms of patronization of a cult which has lost its popularity and strength by that period. During the Vijayanagara period, the Navanātha cult seems to have been revived by the inclusion of many local Nātha-Siddha teachers as part of the cult. Sculptural representations in the form of

[3] Mircea Ellaide, *Op.cit.,* p. 207-08.

miniature low relief engravings of Nātha Siddhas of the Navanātha lineage becomes the hall mark of the Vijayanagara temple iconography.

Cutting across sectarian differences, almost all the medieval temple during 14th-17th Centuries C.E., were embellished with hundreds of representation of Navanāthas, *yōgic* exercises, erotic sculptures, *tāntric* symbols and rituals. All of them are intimately connected to each other in the sense that the Navanāthas are shown performing *yōgic* exercises (*āsanās*), Siddhas and Siddha practitioners involved in sexual acts. Representations of *tāntric* rituals like *Bhairavi cakra* / *Cakra Pūjā*, etc. in the same panels are similar to the representations of Navanāthas. Previous researches did not give the due importance to the study of Nātha Siddha cult in South India, their sculptural representation, in Vijayanagara art and the proliferation of the Siddha Cult in the Vijayanagara and post Vijayanagara art of Tamiḻnādu. Previous researchers did not focused much on these sculptural representations which were identified as the images of ascetics/*yōgis* on different animals.

Looking at the philosophical, literary and ritual context of the Tamiḻ Siddhas and their *tāntric* leanings, the study of the sculptural representations of Navanāthas of South India in general and Tamiḻnādu in particular, have brought out many interesting dimensions of the Siddha Cult in this part of the subcontinent.

The occurrence of Navanāthas as a group in two temple of Karnātaka at Ulsūr and Kalāsipāḷyam provided the initial platform to identify the Navanātha iconography and its other dimensions across the Vijayanagara and post Vijayanagara temples of South India. Besides these examples in stone medium, the post Vijayanagara temples contain some unique sculptural additions in stucco medium representing Nātha-Siddhas and other *Tāntric* ritual representations. The Vijayanagara sculptors, appears to have a thorough knowledge of the literary description of the Navanāthas, their ritual attributes and appendages such as the garlands of *ṛudrākṣas*, *karṇakuṇḍalas* of the same, woolen *yagñōpavīta*, bell, the magical wallet, *laṅgōti* etc. Another important attribute which is referred to in the description of Nāthas and even

Kāpālikas is, in a dirty patched garment[4], which could be a garment in the shape of a long gown, stitched by hand using different pieces of cloth. The Vijayanagara sculptors also tried to show this patched garment and were successful also. All the Navanātha sculptures contain circular and oval double lines at the shoulder and chest level so as to show the patches of the garment. They represented them as riding animals or the reptiles, the names of which when prefixed to the Nātha-Siddhas help us in identifying in the actual *Navanāthas*. The literary description of the Navanāthas culled from across the country helped us to differentiate between the representations of *divine Navanāthas* from ordinary practitioners or *Nāthapanthis*.

The study of the literary descriptions of the sectarian groups of Śaivism starting from the Lakulisas, Pāśupatas, Kāpālikas and Kālamukhas, has shown that but for minor differences, all of them had many common features in terms of teachers, philosophy, rituals and practices, personal attributes and appendages. These common features such as *yōga-daṇḍa*, *yōga-paṭṭa*, *loṅgala* (wooden shaft), deer horn medallion, patched coat, woolen band of *yagñōpavīta*, *laṅgōti*, stringed musical instrument (*kiñjuri*), rosary garland (*rudrākṣamāla*) on various parts of the body, bangle like rings on the arms and wrists possibly made of copper.

In this research work, these ritual appendages on the *Navanātha* sculptural representations are identified for the first time corroborated by literary descriptions. Besides these Navanātha representations, there are equal numbers of interesting sculptures showing various yogic postures which are also part of the Nātha Siddha emphasis on *yōga-sādhana*. In these representations, the *yōga-daṇda* and the *yōga-paṭṭa* are shown as the tools with which, they maintained their static posture (*āsanā*) in the process of *prāṇāyāma*. The *yōga-daṇḍa* is a short wooden piece to facilitate the resting of the hand in a particular *hastamudrā,* as noticed in the Śrisailam examples (Figs.2&3). There are many of representation of the *yōgic* postures performed by the *sādhakas* seated on this thin *yōga-daṇḍa* at Śrisailam. The same *yōga-daṇḍa* get transformed like a wooden table in the Villianūr temple sculptures, on which the

[4] One of the popular Tamiḻ Siddhas, Paṭṭiṇathār also described the appearance of the Siddhas in one of his songs :they will wander in the forest surviving on breathing without taking any solid food, they wander by wearing the patched garment and they will carry the begging bowl in their hand. (*Kādē Tirindheṇṇā, Kāṟṟē pusitheṉṉa, Kantai Kaṟṟi yōdē yeduthheṉṉa?....*) Here the term '*Kantai'* refers to the patched garment. See *Paṭṭiṇathār Songs*, *Nāngām* (4th) *Kacchi Tiru Akaval; on Tiruvidaimarutūr*, Verse. No. 1

ascetics are shown meditating in a variety of yogic postures. The representation of antler horn, on the bodies of Navanāthas which was wrongly identified as *gañja* smoking pipes (chillums) was also explained on the basis of literary descriptions.

Another interesting facet in the Navanātha sculptures is their appearance on the Vaiṣṇava temple in association with *tāntric* iconography and sexual symbols. Two of the Navanāthas, *Matśya* and *Varāha* were given importance. In all probability they might have been taken as the incarnations of the Viṣṇu (*Matśyāvatāra* and *Varāhāvatāra*). Another interesting dimension of the representations of Mīṉanātha, the founder of the *Kaulācāra* is found as performing complex *yōgāsanās* (Fig. 28, 36), playing musical instrument (Fig.26, 29) and dancing with the musical instrument (Fig.44). This is a contrast to the literary descriptions of the Mīṉanātha and his sexual orgies.

Besides these Navanātha representations, the Vaiṣṇava temples of Tamiḻnādu contain (For eg. Tiruvaṭṭāṟu, Susīndram) interesting representation of *yōgāsanās* performed by sexually aroused *sādhakas* which might be showing the underlying philosophy of sex rites as well as *prāṇāyāma* playing the same role in the attainment of *siddha-dēha* or *jīvan mukti*.

Bhairavi cakra also known as *Cakra pūjā* is the most important sculptural representation identified in this work, in the art of the Vijayanagara temples. This *tāntric* ritual received greatest elaboration in many *tāntric* literary works but its sculptural manifestation, has not so far been identified by any of the previous researchers. Appearing in the early Vijayanagara art of Śrisailam (where Bhairavi is shown in a seated posture) this *tāntric* ritual showing a nude female surrounded by ithyphallic *sādhakas* is found very prominently represented in both the Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava temples of Tamiḻnādu and other parts of South India. The same representation continued in the stucco medium on the *gōpura*/*vimāna* of temples which indicate the importance of the *tāntric* ritual during that particular period (Figs.148-162).

The historical continuity of the Siddha Cult in Tamiḻnādu also show that the philosophical, *yōgic* and *tāntric* elements of the medieval age continued into the present century, where the modern Siddhas were believed and worshiped for their

miraculous powers which is manifested in the *samādhi* worship of such liberated souls. Despite the growth of sanskritised Hindu forms of worship, the Siddha Cult continued to attract millions of devotees yearning for their physical and spiritual emancipation. Being rooted in the mundane popular belief system, the Siddha Cult continues its uninterrupted and glorious existence of more than 2000 years. The historical antiquity of the Nātha Siddha tradition as also Tamil̲ Siddha tradition has been the topic of debate. The Navanāthas and Eighty-four Siddhas were identified as belonging to the medieval period between 9^{th} to 12^{th} centuries, but the popular beliefs as enshrined in the literary compositions credit the Nātha Siddhas to have a deathless existence. Hence in this work, we have not touched the complex and controversial issue of chronology of Navanāthas.

Similarly in the case of Tamil̲ Siddhas also, scholars like Kamil Zvelabil, R. Venkataraman, M. Arunachalam, etc. discussed the issue of chronology of the Tamil̲ Siddhas. The literary analysis of the Tamil̲ Siddha works has shown that they cannot be ascribed to a single individual, but different persons of the same name are responsible for such literary composition and as such we have focused mainly on the philosophical, ritual and methodological part of the Tamil̲ Siddha literary production than on the issues of their antiquity and chronological position.

To conclude, this research on the Siddha Cult of Tamil̲nādu: Its history and historical continuity, for the first time cleared some of the misconceptions about the Tamil̲ Siddhas. Contrary to the common belief and understanding, that the Tamil̲ Siddhas are unique and peculiar to this region in terms of their anti-casteist, anti-establishment and rational outlook, it has been shown that they are part of the pan-Indian Nātha-Siddha philosophy, ideology, rituals and practices. In their writings also, they never identified themselves with "the Tamil̲ culture/language/ region". As emphasized earlier in the previous chapters, they preached the *yōgic* path to see the god within oneself to elevate the individual to the stage of *jīvan-mukta*. Different groups of Tamil̲ Siddhas are also part of the pan-Indian traditions of alchemy and *tāntric* philosophy. Apart from that, the Tamil̲ Siddhas are popularly known for their excellent knowledge of human anatomy, functioning of various nerve plexus within the human body, the common ailments and acute diseases that one comes across and the herbal preparations to cure all the diseases from simple to complex. Thus the

Siddha Cult in Tamiḻnādu as a part of the pan-Indian tradition has been catering to the spiritual and physical needs of the popular masses making it a truly Indian tradition.

In contrast to the post-Vijayanagara, modern and contemporary Tamil Siddha philosophy, these sculptural art of the Vijayanagara and Nāyaka periods in Tamilnadu contain such a wide variety and numerous representations of the Nātha-Siddhas, *yōgic* exercises and *tāntric* sexual art representations which are not be found in any other part of South India. As seen before, the Nātha-Siddhas tradition of Western India became popular by 11th -12th centuries, in Karnātaka and Āndhra regions and enters Tamiḻ region after 14th century. Yet, these sculptural representations contain the greatest variety of Nātha-Siddha philosophy, ideology, ritual practices, *yōgic* exercises and sexual symbolism. Even Mīṉanātha and Gōrakṣanātha were absorbed into the native tradition of the 'Eighteen Siddhas' as Macchamuṉi and Gōrakkar, while latter is credited to some literary composition in the Tamiḻ also and there are many *Siddha-Kśētras* in Tamiḻnādu which are identified as the *Samādhi-kśētras* of the Gōrakhnāth. Except the usage of the *pañca-dravyas*, the remaining features of the pan-Indian Nātha-Siddha tradition can be observed in the Tamiḻ Siddhas' philosophy and practices. Being associated with the popular masses, the Tamiḻ Siddhas could survive into the contemporary society and able to attract ardent devotion of the people.

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Appendix -1

Different List of Navanāthas and Eighteen Siddhas

List of Nava Nāthas in Gourana's *Nava Nātha Charitra* (Telugu)

1. Mīṉanātha /Matśyēndranātha
2. Chauraṅgi/Jalandhara
3. Gōrakṣanātha
4. Virupākśa nātha
5. Mēghanātha
6. Siddha Nāgārjuna
7. Khanikanātha
8. Mañjunātha
9. Buddha Siddha / Vyāli Siddha

Source: Chandramouli, N., *Tantric Symbols in the Art of Srisailam,* paper presented in National Seminar on Tantrism, Osmania University, Hyderabad, 2002.

List of Navanāthas in *Gorakhnāth and the Kānphata Yogis* by G. W. Briggs

1. Gōrakṣanātha
2. Matśyendranātha
3. Carpatanātha
4. Maṅgalanātha
5. Ghugonātha
6. Gōpinātha
7. Prāṇanātha
8. Suratanātha
9. Cambanātha

Source: G. W. Briggs, *Gorakhnāth and the Kānphata Yogis*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1938, p. 136

List of Navanātha Siddhas as per *Lexicon of Tamil Literature*

1. Cattiyanātar
2. Catōkanātar
3. Ātinātar
4. Ānātinātar
5. Vekulinātar
6. Mataṅkanātar
7. Maccēntiranātar
8. Katēntiranātar
9. Kōrakanātar

Source: Kamil V. Zvelebil, *Lexicon of Tamil Literature*, E.J. Brill, Leiden, 1995, pp. 165-66 (spellings as used by the author)

Lists of Navanāthas found in some Tamil Works

Sl.No	by Tāyumāṉavar	by Tirumūlar	Other Works	by others
1	Satyanātha	Sanagar	Sathuvanātha	Kadēndirar
2	Satōganātha	Sanandanar	Sarloganātha	Gōrakkar
3	Vagulinātha	Sanādanar	Ādinātha	Koṅgaṇar
4	Madaṅganātha	Sanaṟkumārar	Aruḷinātha	Nāgārjunar
5	Matśyēndranātha	Śivayōgamāmuṉi	Madaṅganātha	Matśyēndirar
6	Kadēndranātha	Patañjali	Matśyēndranātha	Bīmanāthar
7	Ādinātha	Vyāghrapādar	Kadayēndranātha	Aruṇagirināthar
8	Anāthinātha	Tirumūlar	Gōrakhanātha	Bhujaṅga Gurunāthar
9	Gōrakhanātha			

Source: Ganamanjari Sambathkumar, *Śivamayam Kaṇda Siddhargaḷ*, Sri Indhu Publications, Chennai, 2008, (appendix)

A General List of 18 Tamil Siddhas

1. Nandi
2. Agaṣtiyar
3. Tirumūlar
4. Puṇṇākīsar
5. Pulathiyar
6. Pūṉaikkaṇṇar
7. Iḍaikāḍar
8. Bōgar
9. Pulikkēsiyār
10. Karuvūrār
11. Koṅgaṇar
12. Kālaṅgi
13. Aḻugaṇṇar
14. Agapēy
15. Pāmpāṭṭi
16. Tēraiyar
17. Kudambai
18. Saṭṭai Siddhar

Source: Ganamanjari Sambathkumar, *Śivamayam Kaṇda Siddhargaḷ*, Sri Indhu Publications, Chennai, 2008, (appendix)

List of 18 Tamil Siddhars as per Agaṣtya's Sowmiya Sāgaram 1200

1. Saṭṭaimuṉi
2. Sundaramūrti
3. Brahmariṣi
4. Sorubānandar
5. Jothimuṉi
6. Vēdavyāsar
7. Parāsarar
8. Tirumūlar
9. Bōgar
10. Koṅgaṇar
11. Puṇṇākkīsar
12. Matśyamuṉi
13. Karuvūrār
14. Iḍaikāḍar
15. Aḻugaṇṇar
16. Thoḻugaṇṇar
17. Emanāṭṭu Siddhar
18. Gōrakkar

Source: Ganamanjari Sambathkumar, *Śivamayam Kaṇda Siddhargaḷ*, Sri Indhu Publications, Chennai, 2008, (appendix)

Abithama Sindāmaṇi

1. Agastyar
2. Bōgar
3. Gōrakkar
4. Kailāsanāthar
5. Saṭṭaimuṉi
6. Tirumūlar
7. Nandi
8. Kūnkaṇṇar
9. Koṅgaṇar
10. Matśyamuṉi
11. Vāsamuṉi
12. Kūrmamuṉi
13. Kamalamuṉi
14. Iḍaikā dar
15. Puṇṇākkī sar
16. Sundarānandar
17. Rōmamuṉi
18. Brahmamuṉi

Source: Ganamanjari Sambathkumar, *Śivamayam Kaṇda Siddhargaḷ*, Sri Indhu Publications, Chennai, 2008, (appendix)

Classification of Tamil Siddhas by Zvelebil in the *Lexicon of Tamil Literature*

Tamil Cittars	**Semi-legendry persons**	**Poets included in Siddhas group**
Akattiyar	Taṇvantiri	Akappēycittar
Pōkar	Pulaṣtiyar	Aḻukuṇicittar
Kōrakkar	Pusuṇtar	Śivavākkiyar
Kailācanātar	Karuvūrār	Ēnāticcittar
Caṭṭaimuṉi	Irāmatēvar	Iḍaikkāṭṭucittar
Tirumūlar	Tēraiyar	Kāḷaicittar
Nanti	Kapilar	Kaḍuvelicittar
Kūṇkaṇṇar		Kutampaiccittar
Macchamuṉi		Pāmpāṭṭiccittar
Vācamuṉi		Paṭṭiṇattār
Kūrmamuṉi		Pattirakiri
Kamalamuṉi		
Iḍaikkātar		
Puṇṇākkīcar		
Suntarānantar		
Urōmariṣi		
Piramamuṉi		

Source: Kamil V. Zvelebil, *Lexicon of Tamil Literature*, E.J. Brill, Leiden, 1995, pp. 165-66. (the above spellings of the names are given as used by the author in his works)

***Siddha Vaithya* books in Tamil**

1. Kōthamar/ Gowthamar
2. Agastyar
3. Saṅgarar
4. Vairavan
5. Mārkaṇdar
6. Vānmīgar
7. Rōmar
8. Pusuṇdar
9. Saṭṭaimuṉi
10. Nandīsar
11. Tirumūlar
12. Kālaṅgi
13. Matśyamuṉi
14. Pulathiar
15. Karuvūrār
16. Koṅganar
17. Bōgar
18. Pulipāṇi

Source: Gānamañjari Sambathkumar, *Śivamayam Kaṇda Siddhargaḷ*, Sri Indhu Publications, Chennai, 2008, (appendix)

List of Siddhars, their tradition and the place they attained their *Samādhi*

	Name	Tradition	Place of *Samādhi*
1.	Agathiyar	Veḷḷāḷar	Anantha Sayanam
2.	Agapēy	Veḷḷāḷar	A<u>l</u>agar Malai
3.	A<u>l</u>ugannar	Chinese Carpenter	A<u>l</u>agar Malai
4.	Iḍaikātar	Shepherd	Tiruvaṇṇāmalai
5.	Kamalamuṉi	Uvachhar	Tiruvārūr
6.	Karuvūrār	Smith	Karuvūr
7.	Kālaṅgināthar	Chinese Carpenter	Kāñchipuram
8.	Kudambai	Shepherd	Māyuram
9.	Koṅgaṇavar	Kannada Shepherd	Tirupathi
10.	Gōrakkar	Kaḷḷar	Pērūr (Coimbatore)
11.	Saṭṭanāthar	Sinhalese	Śriraṅgam
12.	Sundarānandar	Veḷḷāḷar	Madurai
13.	Daṇvantri	Gurukkal	Vaithīśvaran Koil
14.	Tirumūlar	Veḷḷāḷar	Tillai (Chidambaram)
15.	Tēraiyar	Brahmin	Pothigai Hills
16.	Nandhi	Brahmin	Kāsi
17.	Patañjali	Kaḷḷar	Rāmēśvaram
18.	Pāmpāṭṭi	Gosayi	Virudhāchalam
19.	Puṇṇakkīsar	Kannada Shepherd	Nāṅgunēri
20.	Pulasthiyar	Sinhalese	Yā<u>l</u>pānām
21.	Pūṉaikkaṇṇar	Egyptian	Egypt
22.	Bōgar	Chinese Potter	Pa<u>l</u>aṉi
23.	Macchamuṉi	Fisherman	Tiruparaṅgkuṉdaram
24.	Vāmadēvar	Ōdhuvār	A<u>l</u>agar Malai
25.	Vānmīgar	Hunter	Ettikudi

Source: Aru. Ramanathan, *Siddhar Pātalkaḷ,* Prema Pirasuram, Chennai, 1959

List found in the Tamil work ‘Nam Nāṭṭu Siddhargal’

1. Agastyar
2. Agapēy
3. A‌ḻuganni
4. Iḍaikādar
5. Rāmadēvar
6. Rāmaliṅgar
7. Rōmamuṉi
8. Kabilar
9. Karuvūrār
10. Kāgapusuṇdar
11. Kudambai
12. Koṅgaṇar
13. Gōrakkar
14. Saṭṭaimuṉi
15. Śivavākkiyar
16. Daṇvantri
17. Tirumāḷigaidēvar
18. Tirumūlar
19. Tēraiyar
20. Nandi
21. Pāmbāṭṭi
22. Pulathiyar
23. Pulipāṇi
24. Bōgar
25. Matśyamuṉi

Source: Manickavasagam, R., *Namnāttu Siddharkal*, 1978

List of Eighteen Siddhars by Na. Muthiah

1. Agastiyar
2. Bōgar
3. Gōrakkar
4. Kailāsanāthar
5. Saṭṭaimuṉi
6. Tirumūlar
7. Nandi
8. Kūnkaṇṇar
9. Koṅgaṇar
10. Macchamuṉi
11. Vāsamuṉi
12. Kūrmamuṉi
13. Kamalamuṉi
14. Iḍaikādar
15. Puṇṇakkīsar
16. Sundarānandar
17. Rōmariṣi
18. Bhiramamuṉi

Source: Na. Muthiah, *Eelathu Siththarkal* (Mystics of Sri Lanka), (Tamil), Kumaran Publishers, Chennai, 1994

Siddhar Periya Gñānakōvai* and Deva Mohini Ūrvasi's *Siddha Vaithiya Sitka

1. Kālaṅgi
2. Kalasanāthar
3. Kamalamuṉi
4. Yūgimuṉi
5. Karuṉanandar
6. Bōgamuṉi
7. Saṭṭaināthar
8. Patañjali
9. Gōrakkar
10. Bavanandīsar
11. Pulipāṇi
12. A‌ḻuganni
13. Pāmbāṭṭi
14. Iḍaikādar
15. Vaṣistar
16. Kowsigar
17. Brahmamuṉi
18. Vyāsar
19. Daṇvantri
20. Sattaimuṉi
21. Puṇṇākīsar
22. Nandīsar
23. Agapēy / Agappai
24. Koṅgaṇavar
25. Matśyamuṉi
26. Gurubādar
27. Barathuvasar
28. Kūnkaṇṇar
29. Kaduveli
30. Rōmarishi
31. Pusuṇdar
32. Parāsar
33. Tēraiyar
34. Pulathiyar
35. Sundarānandar
36. Tirumūlar
37. Karuvūrār
38. Śivavākiyar
39. Toḻugaṇṇar
40. Navanāthar

Source: Ganamanjari Sambathkumar, *Śivamayam Kaṇda Siddhargaḷ*, Sri Indhu Publications, Chennai, 2008

Gānamañjari Sambathkumar, *Śivamayam Kaṇda Siddhargal*

1. Agastiyar
2. Bōgar
3. Kāgapusuṇdar
4. Rōmamuṉi
5. Sri Vallaba / Sundarāṉandar
6. Kālaṅgināthar
7. Nandhīsar
8. Koṅgaṇar
9. Saṭṭai Muṉi
10. Yāgōpu/ Rāmadēvar
11. Gōrakkar
12. Matśyamuṉi
13. Karuvūrār
14. Pinnākīsar
15. Śivavākiyar
16. Prāndar
17. Agapēy
18. Tēraiyar
19. Pāmpāṭṭi
20. Kudambai
21. Pulipāṇi
22. Aḻugaṇi
23. Kalluli
24. Kamalamuṉi
25. Thirumūlar
26. Patañjali
27. Śri Palguni Rudra Siddhar
28. Pon Muthiraiyar/ Śri Swarṇa Bairavar
29. Śri Nataṉa Gōpāla Nāyaki Sāmigaḷ
30. Savalikē Śivaliṅgēśvara Siddhar
31. Pasumādathu Kōṇār Siddhar
32. Pulathiyar
33. Śri Pōdo Siddhar Gñāni
34. Tirukōilūr Jadāmudi Thambirān Siddhar
35. Vēppilai Kaṭṭi Siddhar
36. Kollar Gōpuram Kāthan Siddhar
37. Paṭṭiṇathār
38. Sabda Kandhaliṅga Siddhar
39. Kaduveli Siddhar
40. Siddhar Sāṅga Dēvar
41. Śri Sāndhunu Bīli Krishna Mahānu Bāvalu siddhar
42. Kavasapākkam Malapītan Siddhar (Pūndi Siddhar)
43. Sri Perumāṉanda Siddhar, Thēni
44. Tāyumāṉavar
45. Vāthiyār Iyya, Sri Muthu VaduganāthaSiddhar, Siṅgampuṉari
46. Śri Sadāśiva Brahmēndirar
47. Siriya Silambakkini Siddhar
48. Śri Betha Nārāyaṇa siddhar
49. Idiyāppa Siddhar
50. Sīnanthal,Śiva Peruvala Siddhar
51. Tiruvallam Pāmbaṇiyan Siddhar
52. Gana Thaṅganan Siddhar
53. Pākkar
54. Iḍaikādar
55. Chairman Aruṇāchalam

Source: Ganamanjari Sambathkumar, *Śivamayam Kaṇda Siddhargaḷ*, Sri Indhu Publications, Chennai, 2008

List of 18 Siddhars with their Place and Caste as per imaginary picture found in **Tañjāvūr Saraswathi Mahāl library**

Name	Place	Caste
1. Tirumūlar	Tillai	Tacchar (carpenter)
2. Daṇvaṇtri	Vaithīśvarankoil	Vaṉigar (Trader)
3. Koṅgaṇavar	Tirupathi	Kosavar (Potter)
4. Kodumba Siddhar (Kudambai Siddhar)	Māyavaram (Mayiladudurai)	Kārai kāttar
5. Rāmadēvar	Aḻagarmalai	Reddy
6. Vālmīgar	Reddykudi	Vēduvan (Hunter)
7. Patañjali	Rāmēśvaram	Chetty
8. Karuvūrār	Karuvūr	Kudimagan Jāti/ Paṇikar
9. Kumbamuṉi	Tiruvanandapuram	Brahmana
10. Kamalamuṉi	Tiruvalur	Kaṇṇār Jāti (Black Smith?)
11. Nandidēvar	Kāsi	Brahmana
12. Gōrakar	Poiyūr	Vaṉigar (Trader)
13. Edakāttār (Iḍaikātar)	Tiruvaṇṇāmalai	Iḍaiyar (Shepherd)
14. Bōgar	Paḻaṉi	Kosavanar (Potter)
15. Saṭṭaimuṉi	Śriraṅgam	Sēniyar Jāti
16. Pāmpāṭṭi	Tirukaḍaiyūr	Sēdar Jāti
17. Macchamuṉi	Tiruparaṅkuṉdram	Sembadavar (fisherman)
18. Sundarāṉandar	Madurai	Reddy

List of 18 Siddhars and their Abodes as found in the Pamphlet '*Pathinēn Siddhargal Saraṇam*' issued by the Arulmighu Karuvurar Saṇmarga Saṅgam, Tañjāvūr

1. Agathiyar	–	Aṉantha Sayaṇam
2. Agappēy Siddhar	–	Tiruvaiyāṟu
3. Aḻugaṇṇi	–	Nāgapaṭṭiṇam
4. Iḍaikādar	–	Tiruvaṇṇāmalai
5. Karuvūrār	–	Kāḷahasti
6. Kamalamuṉi	–	Madurai
7. Kāḷaṅgi Nātha	–	Kāñchi
8. Kudambai	–	Mayilādudurai
9. Gōrakkar	–	Trigōṇamalai
10. Saṭṭainātha	–	Śriraṅgam
11. Koṅgaṇavar	–	Tirupathi
12. Tirumūlar	–	Chidambaram
13. Tēraiyar	–	Pothigai
14. Nandhidēvar	–	Kāsi
15. Patañjali	–	Rāmēśvaram
16. Pāmpāṭṭi	–	Marudhamalai
17. Bōgar	–	Paḻaṉi
18. Macchamuṉi	–	Tirupparaṅkuṉdram

List of Siddhars and Rishis as found in the Pamphlet '*Siddhargal Tiruvaḍi Pōṟṟi*' issued by the Aruḷmighu Karuvūrār Sanmārga Saṅgam, Tañjāvūr

(It starts with prefix '*Om*' followed by the Siddhar's names and ends with refrain '*Tiruvadigal Pōṟṟi*')

1. Agathīsar
2. Agapēy
3. Asuvani dēvar
4. Anumān
5. Ambigānandar
6. Aruṇagirināthar
7. Aruḷnandi Sivāchāriyar
8. Aḻugaṉṉi
9. Iḍaikādar
10. Rāmaliṅga Sāmy
11. Rāmadēvar
12. Rāmānandar
13. Avvaiyār
14. Kañjamalai
15. Kadaippiḷḷai
16. Kaduvēli
17. Gananāthar
18. Kaṇapathi dāsar
19. Kamalamuṉi
20. Karuvūrār
21. Kalluli Siddhar
22. Kalaikottu Muṉivar
23. Kāgapujaṇdar
24. Kālaṅgināthar
25. Kugai-Namachivāyar
26. Kudambai
27. Kumaragurubarar
28. Guru Dakśiṇāmūrty
29. Guru Rājar
30. Kūrmānandar
31. Koṅganēswarar
32. Gōrakkar
33. Saṅgamuṉi Siddhar
34. Saṅkara Mahariṣi
35. Saṭṭai Nāthar
36. Sandikēsar
37. Satyāṉandar
38. Śivavākkiyar
39. Śivāṉandar
40. Sugabrāhmmar
41. Subramaṇiyar
42. Sundarāṉandar
43. Sūriyānandar
44. Janagar
45. Jaṉandaṉar
46. Janādanar
47. Janakumārar
48. Danvantri
49. Tāyumāṉavar
50. Gñānasambandar
51. Tirunāvukkarasar
52. Tirumāḷigai Dēvar
53. Tirumūla Dēvar
54. Tiruvaḷḷuvar
55. Tēraiyar
56. Nandanār
57. Nandīsvarar
58. Nāthantha Siddhar
59. Nāradar
60. Nondi Siddhar
61. Paṭṭināthār
62. Bhathragiriyār
63. Patañjali
64. Bharathuvājar
65. Paramānandar
66. Parāsarishi
67. Pāmbāṭṭi
68. Piṅgala Muṉivar
69. Brighu Mahariṣi
70. Bramma Muṉivar
71. Puṇṇākkīsar
72. Pulathīsar
73. Pulipāṇi
74. Pūnaikkanār
75. Bōgar
76. Macchamuṉivar
77. Mayurēsar
78. Māṇikkavāsagar
79. Mārkaṇḍēyar
80. Mālaṅgan
81. Mirugaṇda Riṣi
82. Muthānandar
83. Mēikaṇda dēvar
84. Mouṉa Siddhar
85. Yūgi Muṉivar
86. Yōga Siddhar
87. Yōgānandar
88. Rōmariṣi
89. Vasista Mahariṣi
90. Varadhariṣi
91. Varariṣi
92. Varāhimigi
93. Vālmīgi
94. Viṣvāmitrar
95. Vyāsamuṉivar

Siddhas of Tirunelveli District

1. Agathiyar
2. Apparāndha Swāmigaḷ
3. Arikesava Nallūr Tirumuttaiya Bhāgavadhar
4. Śri Rāmamūrthy Swāmigaḷ
5. Umaru Pulavar
6. Karuvai Pēroli
7. Śri Kumara Gurubarar
8. Kōdaganallūr Sundara Swāmigaḷ
9. Saṅgu Swāmigaḷ
10. Śri Sivānandha Saraswathi Swāmigaḷ
11. Earal Nagar Chairman Siddhar
12. Gñāniyār Adigaḷ
13. Timmarājapuram Śri Picchu Swāmigaḷ @ Sri Sundararāja Swāmigaḷ
14. Nammāḻvār
15. Namaśivaya Kavirāyar
16. Paṉaiyūr Āṇdavargaḷ: Śri Saṅkara Nārāyaṇa and Śri Dakśiṇāmūrthy Swāmigaḷ
17. Ponnaiyāh Swāmigaḷ
18. Śri Mouṉaguru Swāmigaḷ
19. Śri Rettiyāpaṭṭi Swāmigaḷ
20. Valla Nāṭṭu Swāmigaḷ
21. Vaithiyaliṅga Swāmigaḷ
22. Hazarath Umaroli Nāyagam
23. Hazarath Thaika Sahibvoli Nāyagam
24. Hazarath Sheik Muhammad Vāliholi Nāyagam
25. Śri Kēmal Swāmigaḷ

Source: Sakthi B. Subramanian, *Nellai Mavatta Sitharkal*, The South India Saiva Siddhanta Works Publishing Society, Tinnevely, Limited, 1995

List of Eeḻatthu (Śri Laṅkan) Siddhas

1. Kadaiyir Sāmigaḷ
2. Paramaguru Sāmigaḷ
3. Kuḻandaivel Sāmigaḷ
4. Aruḷambala Sāmigaḷ
5. Yōgar Sāmigaḷ
6. Nava Nātha Sāmigaḷ
7. Periyāṉaikuṭṭi Sāmigaḷ
8. Sitthāṉaikuṭṭi Sāmigaḷ
9. Sadaivaradha Sāmigaḷ
10. Ānandha Sadākśra Guru
11. Sollātchi Ammaiyār
12. Tālaiyan Sāmigaḷ
13. Mahādēva Sāmigaḷ
14. Sadaiyamma
15. Nāganātha Sāmigaḷ
16. Nainathīvu Sāmigaḷ

Source: Na. Muthiah, *Eelathu Siththarkal* (Mystics of Sri Lanka), (Tamil), Kumaran Publishers, Chennai, 1994

List of 84 Mahāsiddhas and their Titles (lived between 8th & 12th Centuries)

1. The Mahāsiddha Lūipa – The Fish-Gut Eater
2. The Mahāsiddha Līlapa - The Royal Hedonist
3. The Mahāsiddha Virūpa - Dākini-Master
4. The Mahāsiddha Dōmbipa - The Tiger-Rider
5. The Mahāsiddha Śavaripa - The Hunter
6. The Mahāsiddha Saraha - The Great Brahmin
7. The Siddha Kaṅkāripa - The Lovelorn Widower
8. The Mahāsiddha Mīṉapa - The Hindu Jonah
9. The Nāth Siddha Gōrakṣa - The Immortal Cowherd
10. The Nāth Siddha Cauraṅgipa - The Dismembered Stepson
11. The Siddha Vīnāpa - The Musician
12. The Mahāsiddha Sāntipa - (Ratnākaraśānti), The Complacent Missionary
13. The Mahāsiddha Tantipa - The Senile Weaver
14. The Siddha Cāmāripa - The Cobbler
15. The Siddha Khadgapa - The Fearless Thief
16. The Mahāsiddha Nāgārjuna - Philosopher and Alchemist
17. The Mahāsiddha Kānhapa - (Krsnācārya), The Dark Siddha
18. The Mahāsiddha Āryadeva - (Karnaripa), The One-Eyed
19. The Siddha Thaganapa - The Compulsive Liar
20. The Mahāsiddha Nāropa - The Dauntless

21. The Siddha Śyalipa - The Jackal-Yogin
22. The Mahāsiddha Tilopa - The Great Renunciate
23. The Siddha Catrappa - The Lucky Beggar
24. The Siddha Bhadrapa - The Exclusive Brahmin
25. The Siddha Dukhandi - The Scavenger
26. The Siddha Ajogi - The Rejected Wastrel
27. The Siddha Kālapa - The Handsome Madman
28. The Siddha Dhobipa - The Wise Washerman
29. The Siddha Kaṅkana - The Siddha-King
30. The Mahāsiddha Kambala - (Lwa Wa Pa), The Black-Blanket-Clad Yogin
31. The Mahāsiddha Deṅgipa - The Courtesan's Brahmin Slave
32. The Siddha Bhandepa - The Envious God
33. The Siddha Tantepa - The Gambler
34. The Mahāsiddha Kukkuripa - The Dog-Lover
35. The Siddha Kucipa - The Goitre-Necked Yogin
36. The Siddha Dharmapa - The Eternal Student
37. The Siddha Mahipa - The Greatest
38. The Siddha Acinta - The Avaricious Hermit
39. The Siddha Babhaha - The Free Lover
40. The Siddha Nalinapa - The Self-Reliant Prince
41. The Mahāsiddha Bhusuku - (Śāntideva), The Idle Monk
42. The MahāsiddhaIndrabhūti - The Enlightened Siddha-King
43. The Siddha Mekopa - Guru Dread-Stare
44. The Siddha Kotālipa - (Tog tse pa), The Peasant Guru
45. The Siddha Kamparipa - The Blacksmith
46. The Mahāsiddha Jālandhara - The Dākinī's Chosen one
47. The Mahāsiddha Rāhula - The Rejuvenated Dotard
48. The Siddha Dharmapa - (Gharbari), The Contrite Pandita
49. The Siddha Dhokaripa - The Bowl-Bearer
50. The Siddha Medhini - The Tired Farmer
51. The Siddha Paṅkajapa - The Lotus-Born Brahmin
52. The Mahāsiddha Ghantāpa - The Celibate Bell-Ringer

53. The Siddha Jogipa - The Siddha-Pilgrim
54. The Mahāsiddha Celukapa - The Revitalized Drone
55. The Siddha Godhuripa - The Bird-Catcher
56. The Siddha Lucikapa - The Escapist
57. The Siddha Nirguṇapa - The Enlightened Moron
58. The Siddha Jayānanda - Crow Master
59. The Siddha Pacaripa - The Pastrycook
60. The Siddha Campaka - The Flower-King
61. The Siddha Bhiksanapa - Siddha Two-Teeth
62. The Siddha Dhilipa - The Epicurean Merchant
63. The Siddha Kumbharipa - The Potter
64. The Nāth Siddha Carbaripa - (Carpati), The Petrifier
65. The Yoginī Siddha Manibhadra - The Happy Housewife
66. The Yoginī Siddha Mekhalā - The Elder Severed-Headed Sister
67. The Yoginī Siddha Kanakhalā - The Younger Severed-Headed Sister
68. The Siddha Kilakilapa - The Exiled Loud-Mouth
69. The Siddha Kantalipa - The Ragman-Tailor
70. The Siddha Dhahulipa - The Blistered Rope-Maker
71. The Siddha Udhilipa - The Bird-Man
72. The Kapāli Siddha Kapālapa - The Skull-Bearer
73. The Siddha Kirapālapa - (Kilapa), The Repentant Conqueror
74. The Mahāsiddha Sakara - (Saroruha), the Lotus-Born
75. The Siddha Sarvabhaksa - The Glutton
76. The Mahāsiddha Nāgabodhi - The Red-Horned Thief
77. The Mahāsiddha Dārikapa - Slave-King of the Temple Whore
78. The Siddha Putalipa - The Mendicant Icon-Bearer
79. The Siddha Upanaha - The Boot-maker
80. The Siddha Kokilipa - The Complacent Esthete
81. The Mahāsiddha Anaṅgapa - The Handsome Fool
82. The Yoginī Mahāsiddha Lakśmīṅkara - The Crazy Princess
83. The Siddha Samudra - The Pearl Diver
84. The Siddha Vyālipa - The Courtesan's Alchemist

Source: Keith Dowman (Trans.), *Masters of Mahāmudrā: Songs and Histories of the Eighty-Four Buddhist Siddhas*, State University, New York Press, 1985

Appendix - 2
List of Puduchērry Siddhas – list I

1. Śri Lakśmaṇa Swāmy, E.C. R. Kīlputhupet, Iyannar Koil Backside.
2. Śri Śivajñāna Bālayya Swāmy, E.C. R. Bommaiyarpalayam.
3. Śri Guru Siddhāṉanda Swāmy, E.C. R. Karuvadikuppam.
4. Śri Vēdāntha Swāmy, Vasanth Nagar, Opp-Ration Shop, Muthialpet.
5. Śri Akkā Swāmy - Nārayaṇa Paradesi Swāmy, Athithi Inn Backside, Vaithikuppam.
6. Śri Thollai Kādhu Swāmy, Maṇakula Vināyagar Temple, Puducherry.
7. Śri Nāgaliṅga Swāmy, Ambalathadaiyār Maḍam (Chetti koil back st.) Puducherry.
8. Śri Moula Sāhib Swāmy, Mulla St, Opp-Railway Station, Puducherry.
9. Śri Kathirvēl Swāmy, Brindavan, 3rd cross.
10. Śri Kambali Jñāna Dēsiga Swāmy, Industrial Estate, Tattāñchāvady.
11. Śri Perivarkku Periyār Swāmy, Poṉṉi Amman koil, Pākkamudaiyānpet.
12. Śri Kaduveli Swāmy, Irumbai, (referred in Tēvāram songs).
13. Śri Sadaiyappar Swāmy, Vaḻudhāvūr, Opp. Rani Hospital.
14. Śri Sacchidāṉanda Swāmy, Siruṅgēri Matha, 100 feet road.
15. Śri Śakthivēl Paramāṉanda Swāmy, Kāramaṇikuppam, (near railway gate).
16. Śri Thēṅgāi Swāmy, opp- E.B. Villianur
17. Śri Rāma Paradesi Swāmy, Villianur
18. Śri Badē Sāhib, Chiṉṉa Bābu Samudram.
19. Śri Vaṇṇāra Paradesi Swāmy, Odiampattu.
20. Śri Aḻagappar Swāmy, Theṇṇampākkam.
21. Śri Śivapragāsam Swāmy, Nallārtūr.
22. Śri Guru Swāmy Ammal, Ariyur (Villupuram Road)
23. Śri Dakśiṇāmūrthy Swāmy, Paḷḷi Thennal, (Villupuram Road)
24. Śri Mottai Swāmy, Ariyāṅkuppam, Cuddalore Road.
25. Śri Śivajñāna Bāla Siddhar Swāmy, Mailam Murugan Koil.
26. Śri Gaṇapathy Swāmy, Karuvadikuppam, Edaiyañchavady st, (Maruthi School backside).
27. Śri Kuṇḍaliṇi Siddhar Swāmy, Tiruvakarai koil.
28. Śri La Śri Arul Śakthi Annai, Pillaiyarkuppam, Cuddalore road.
29. Śri Maṇṇuruṭṭi Swāmy, Thennañsalai, near bus stand.
30. Śri Aravindar and Aṉṉai, Puducherry.

Source: Advertisement Banner placed by volunteers in front of the Siddha temples of Puducherry.

List of Puducherry Siddhas – list II

1. Śri Guru Siddhāṉanda Swāmy, E.C. R. Karuvadikuppam.
2. Śri Yāḻpāṇam Kathirvēl Swāmy, Brindavan, 3rd cross
3. Śri Ēmbalam Appār Swāmy, Ēmbalam
4. Śri Nāgaliṅga Swāmy, Ambalathadaiyār Madam (Chetti koil back st.) Puducherry
5. Śri Thollai Kādhu Swāmy, Maṇakula Vināyagar Temple, Puducherry
6. Śri Kambali Jñāna Dēsiga Swāmy, Industrial Estate, Tattanchavady.
7. Śri Satty Sāmy
8. Śri Akkā Paradesi Swāmy, Athithi Inn Backside, Vaithikuppam
9. Śri Vaḻaipaḻa Sāmy.
10. Śri Thēṅgāi Swāmy, opp- E.B. Villianur
11. Śri Rāma Paradēsi Swāmy, Villianur
12. Śri Guru Swāmy Ammal, Ariyur (Villupuram Road)
13. Śri Maṇṇuruṭṭi Swāmy, Thennañsalai, near bus stand.
14. Sadai Thāyārammāl
15. Śri Dakśiṇāmūrthy Swāmy, Paḷḷi Thennal, (Villupuram Road)
16. Śri Tirukkāñji Sāmy.
17. Śri Aḻagappar Swāmy, Theṇṇampākkam
18. Śri Suppurāya Paradesi.
19. Śri Śakthivēl Paramāṉanda Swāmy, Kārāmaṇikuppam, (near railway gate)
20. Śri Dēvarāssu Swāmy
21. Appa Paithiyam Sāmy
22. Śri Lakśmaṇa Swāmy, E.C. R. Kīlputhupet, Iyannar Koil Backside.
23. Śri Vēdāntha Swāmy, Vasanth Nagar, Opp-Ration Shop, Muthialpet.
24. Śri Moula Sāhib Swāmy, Mulla St, Opp-Railway Station, Puducherry.
25. Śri Badē Sāhib, Chiṉṉa Bābu Samudram.
26. Murugaṉ Adimai Pacchaiyammāl
27. Pavaḻakodi Sāmy

Source: C. S. Murugesan, *Puducherry Siddhargal*, Puducherry.

Appendix – 3

List of Siddhas as per the handbook of the Kambalikārankuppam Matha, Puducherry (in Tamil Alphabetic)

1. Agaṣthiyar
2. Agappēy Siddhar
3. Asuvini Dēvar
4. Attiri Mahariṣi
5. Anumān
6. Ambigāṉandar
7. Aruṇagirināthar
8. Aruḷnandhi Śivāchāriyār
9. Allama Prabhu
10. Aḻugaṉṉi Siddhar
11. Iḍaikādar
12. Rāmaliṅga Sāmigaḷ
13. Rāmadēvar
14. Rāmānandar
15. Umāpathi Śivāchāriyār
16. Avvaiyār
17. Kañjamalai Siddhar
18. Kadaippiḷḷai Siddhar
19. Kaduveli Siddhar
20. Kaṇṇāṉandar
21. Kaṉṉi Siddhar
22. Gaṇa Nāthar
23. Gaṇapathi Dāsar
24. Kadamba Mahariṣi
25. Kabilar
26. Kamala Muṉivar
27. Karuvūr Dēvar
28. Kalluli Siddhar
29. Kālai Kōttu Muṉivar
30. Kaubāla Siddhar
31. Gaṇarāmar
32. Kāgapujaṇdar
33. Kāsiyar
34. Kālaṅgi Nāthar
35. Kugai Namachivāyar
36. Kudambai Siddhar
37. Kumara Gurubarar
38. Guru Dakśiṇāmūrthy
39. Gururājar
40. Kurumbai Siddhar
41. Kūrmānandar
42. Koṅganēśwarar
43. Gōrakar
44. Kousigar
45. Gowthamar
46. Saṅgamuṉi Siddhar
47. Saṅkara Mahariṣi
48. Saṅgili Siddhar
49. Sachithāṉandar
50. Sattanāthar
51. Chandikēsar
52. Satyāṉandar
53. Śivayōga Māmuṉivar
54. Śivavākkiyar
55. Śivāṉandar
56. Suga Brahmmar
57. Sundarāṉandar
58. Sundaramūrthy
59. Sūthamuṉivar
60. Sūryāṉandar
61. Sūlamuṉivar
62. Sēthumuṉivar
63. Sorūbāṉandar
64. Jambu Mahariṣi
65. Jamadkaṉi
66. Jaṉagar
67. Janandhanar
68. Janādanar
69. Janakumarar
70. Jaganāthar
71. Jayamuṉivar
72. Jñāna Siddhar
73. Paramāṉandar
74. Daṉvaṇtri
75. Tāyumāṉavar
76. Thāṉandar
77. Trigōṇa Siddhar
78. Gñānasambandar
79. Tirunāvukkarasar
80. Tirumāḷigai Dēvar

81.	Tirumūla Dēvar	98.	Pidināgīsar	115.	Mēykaṇda Dēvar
82.	Tiruvaḷḷuvar	99.	Brighu Mahariṣi	116.	Mouṉa Siddhar
83.	Durvāsa Muṉivar	100.	Brahmamuṉivar	117.	Yāgōbu
84.	Tēraiyar	101.	Pīr Muhamad	118.	Yūgi Muṉivar
85.	Nandanār	102.	Puṇṇākkīsar	119.	Yō Siddhar
86.	Nandīsvarar	103.	Pulathīsar	120.	Yōgānandar
87.	Nāthānda Siddhar	104.	Pulippāṇi Siddhar	121.	Rōmariṣi
88.	Nāradhar	105.	Pūṉaikkaṇṇar	122.	Vaśista Mahariṣi
89.	Noṇdi Siddhar	106.	Bhōga Mahariṣi	123.	Varadhariṣi
90.	Paṭṭinathār	107.	Matśyamuṉivar	124.	Varariṣi
91.	Bhatragiriyār	108.	Masthān	125.	Varāhimigi
92.	Patañjaliyār	109.	Mayurēsar	126.	Vālmīgi
93.	Parathuvāsar	110.	Māṇickavāsagar	127.	Viśvāmitrar
94.	Paramāṉandar	111.	Mārkaṇdēyar	128.	Vyākramar
95.	Parāsariṣi	112.	Mālaṅgan	129.	Vyāsamuṉivar
96.	Pāmpāṭṭi Siddhar	113.	Mirukandariṣi	130.	Viḷaiyāttu Siddhar
97.	Piṅgala Muṉivar	114.	Muthāṉandar	131.	Vēdānta Siddhar

All of these starts with the auspicious word '*Ōm*' and ends with the refrain '*Tiruvadigal Pōṟṟi*'.

Source: Raṅgarāsa Dēsiga Swāmigal, *Siddhargal Pōṟṟi Toguppu*, (handbook) Arul Oli Jñāna Nilayam, Kambalikarankuppam, 2011

Appendix - 4

List of Tamil Siddhas (Displayed in Tavatiru Chitramuthu Adigaḷ and Vīra Aruṭpragāsa Sāmigal Mutt, Kambalikārankuppam, Puducherry)

1. Thollaikādu Swāmigaḷ, Maṇakuḷa Viṉāyagar temple
2. Śri Nāgaliṅga Swāmigaḷ (*Jīva Samādhi*), Śri Ambalatadaiyār mutt (Āṉi 7th *Gurupūja*)
3. Śri Moula Sāhib Swāmigaḷ, Mulla St., Puducherry
4. Śri Guru Akkā Sāmigaḷ (*Jīva Samādhi*), Śri Akkā Sāmi Mutt, Vaithikuppam, (Āṉi *Gurupūja*)
5. Śri Nārāyaṇa Paradēsi, Akkā Sāmy Mutt, Puducherry. (disciple of Akkā Sāmy - Mārgaḻi Tiruvāthirai *Gurupūja*)
6. Śri Kathirvēl Sāmigaḷ, 3rd cross st., Brindhavan, Puducherry
7. Śri Siddhāṉandha Swāmigaḷ, (*Jīva Samādhi*), Karuvadikuppam, Puducherry. (Vaikāsi 15th, *Magam* Star, *Gurupūja*)
8. Śri Vēdhānantha Sāmigaḷ, (Śri Vēlāyutham Sāmy temple), Tiruvaḷḷuvar Nagar, Muthialpet.
9. Śri Kambali Gñāna Dēsiga Sāmigaḷ (*Jīva Samādhi*), Thattāñchāvadi, Industrial Estate, Mārgaḷi 6th *Gurupūja*)
10. Śri Periyavargalukum Periyavar Sāmigaḷ, Thattāñchāvadi, Industrial Estate, (back side of the Śri Kambali Gñāna Dēsiga Sāmigaḷ mutt)
11. Śri Sadaiyappar Sāmigaḷ, (opp. Rāṇi Hospital), Vaḻuthāvūr Road, Pondy
12. Śri Maṇṇuruṭṭi Sāmigaḷ, Thennañsālai, Suburāyapiḷḷai Thōṭṭam, Pondy Bus stand backside)
13. Śri Subramaṇiya Abinava Satchithāṉandha Sāmigaḷ, Siruṅgēri Mutt, Ellaipiḷḷai Chāvady
14. Śri Sandhāṇa Sāmigaḷ, Siruṅgēri mutt, Ellaipiḷḷai Chāvady, (opp Serathoppu) Puduchērry
15. Śri Śakthivēl Sāmigaḷ, Kārāmaṇikuppam (near railway gate) Pondy. (Ādi 2nd *Gurupūja*)
16. Śri ŚivaGñāna Bāḷaiya Siddhar, Bommaiyār Pāḷayam
17. Śri Lakśmaṇa Sāmigaḷ, Puthupattu,(back side of Iyanār temple) Kālāpēt, Pondy.
18. Śri Gaṇapathy Sāmigaḷ, Karuvadikuppam, Edaiyāñchāvady st., (back side of Airport)
19. Śri Thēṅgāi Sāmigaḷ, Villianur Road, Tattanchavady (opp to EB substation)
20. Śri Rāmaparadēsi Sāmigaḷ, Sulthānpēt, Pondy
21. Viyōmā Sāmigaḷ (Tirukkāñji Sāmigaḷ), Kaṉuvāpēt, Villianur, Puducherry

22. Śri Dakśiṇāmūrthy Sāmigaḷ, Paḷḷi Theṉṉal (near Vadamaṅgalam), Āṉi 26th
Gurupūja)

23. Śri Gurusāmi Ammal, Ariyūr, (Chitirai full moon day *Gurupūja*)

24. Śri Mahān Badē Sāhib (*Jīva Samādhi*), Chiṉṉabābu Samudram, Kaṇdamaṅgalam,
(on Āyilya star of Māsi month *Gurupūja*)

25. Śri Mahān Vaṇṇāra Paradesi Sāmigaḷ, Odiyampattu, Kombākkam

26. Śri la Śri Aruḷ Śakthi Aṉṉai Śakthi Pītam, Piḷḷaiyārkuppam, Kirumāmbākkam.
(her Guru's Rettiyapatti Sāmy memorial also here)

27. Śri Bagavantha Sāmigaḷ, Puduppāḷayam, Cuddalore

28. Śri Dayāṉandha Sāmigaḷ, Puduppāḷayam, Cuddalore

29. Sarguru Nityāṉanda, Koḻippākkam, (Pattāmpākkam-4.5 km from Aṇṇa Grāmam)

30. Śri Kaduveli Siddhar, Tiruchittrambalam, Irumbai

31. Śri Śivagñāna Bāla-Siddhar, Mailam Murugaṉ Temple (North side)

32. Śri Suburāya Paradēsi , Mailam Murugaṉ Temple (*Jīva Samādhi* is on the
sanctum)

33. Śri Kuṇḍalini Siddhar, Thiruvakkarai (10 km north from Madagadipattu)

34. Śri Pavaḻaṅkudi Siddhar, Sōmbattu, (near Tirukkanūr, via Sellipattu, Sōrappattu)

35. Śri Raṅgasāmi Siddhar, Sōmbattu

36. Śri Śivapragāsa Sāmigaḷ, Nallāṟṟūr, Ēmbalam (Puraṭṭāsi full moon day *Gurupūja*)

37.Śri Aḻagar Swāmigaḷ, Thennampākkam, Ēmbalam, Pondy

38. Śri Appar Sāmigaḷ, Thennampākkam, Ēmbalam, Pondy

39. Śri Ulaganātha Kalarāṉandha Sāmigaḷ, Sōriyaṅkuppam (School), Bāhūr

40. Śri Devaraj samigal, Vanniyanallur, Sūnambēdu (Āni, Pūrāda star *Gurupūja*)

41. Śri Kandasāmy, Kārnapattu (St. Rāmaliṅga's disciple)

42. Tirumūlar, Chidambaram

43. Bōgasiddhar, Paḻaṉi

44. Karuvūr Siddhar, Karūr (Tirukāḷahasti Ānilaiyappar temple)

45. Pulippāṇi Siddhar, Vaigāvūr (near Paḻaṉi)

46. Koṅgaṇar Siddhar, Tirupathi, Tirumala

47. Matśyamuṉi, Tirupparaṅguṉdaram, Tiruvāṇaikkā

48. Vallaba Siddhar @ Sundarāṉandhar, Madurai

49. Saṭṭaimuṉi Siddhar, Śri Raṅgam

50. Agathiya Siddhar, Kumbēśwara temple in Kumbakōṇam; and in
Tiruvanandhapuram

51. Tēraiyar Siddhar, Thoraṇamalai (Malaiyāla Nādu)

52. Gōrakkar Siddhar, Pērur
53. Pāmpāṭṭi Siddhar, Marudhamalai, Dwāraga and Virudhāchalam
54. Śivavākkiyar, Kumbakōṇam
55. Rōmariṣi, Tirukkailai
56. Kāgapusuṇdar, Trichy - Uraiyūr
57. Iḍaikāṭṭu Siddhar, Tiruvaṇṇāmalai
58. Kuthambai, Mailāduturai
59. Patañjali Siddhar, Chidambaram, A_lagarkōil and Rāmēśwaram
60. Pulathiyar - Pābanāzam, Tiru Āvudaiyārkōil
61. Tirumūlar Nokka Siddhar, Mēlai Chidambaram
62. A_lagaṇṇar Siddhar, Nāgapaṭṭiṇam
63. Nāradhar, Tiruvidaimarudhur, Karavainallur
64. Rāmadēsa Siddhar, A_lagarmalai
65. Mārkaṇdēyar, Karuvai Nallur
66. Kāsibar, Ruthragiri
67. Puṇṇākkīsar, Nannaser
68. Varadhar, Thenmalai
69. Ka_n_ni, Peruṅgāvūr
70. Ta_nvaṇtri Vasittar Siddhargal, Vaithīśvaran koil
71. Nandi Siddhar, at Kāśi,
72. Tiruvāvaduthurai, Kālaṅgi
73. Kaduveli siddhar, Tirukkañchipuram
74. Viśvamitrar, at Kāśi
75. Gauthama Siddhar, Tiruvarunai and Tiruvidaimaruthur
76. Kamalamu_ni Siddhar, Ārūr
77. Sundrānandhar Siddhar, Tiruvāñchiyam
78. Sundarar Siddhar, Varitcham, Tiruvārūr
79. Kālaṅgi Nāthar, Tirukkadavur, Tiruppanandhal
80. Vālmīgi, Ettikudi, Tiruvaiyaru
81. Agappēy Siddhar, - Tiruvaiyāṛu, Ettikudi
82. Paṭṭinathār Siddhar, Tiruvottriyūr
83. Śri Paramachāriyar (Swāmigaḷ *Samādhi*), Kāñchipuram
84. Śri Sennimalai Siddhar, Nāṅgunēri in Kerala

85. Śri Śadhāśiva Bramēndrar Siddhar, Nērur
86. Śri Rāmakrishaṇar, Śri Saradha Devi, Belur Mutt
87. Śri Rāgavēndra, Manthrālayam
88. Śri Ramaṇa Mahariṣi, Tiruvaṇṇāmalai
89. Śri Kumaragurubarar, Kāśi
90. Śri Nadaṉagōpāla Nāyagi Sāmigaḷ, Kāthakkinaru
91. Śri Gñānānandha Sāmigaḷ, Anaithu Dabovaṉaṅgal
92. Shridi Sāibaba, Shridi
93. Sēkilār Perumān, Madurai Mīṉātchi Amman Temple (sanctum's back side)
94. Rāmānujar, Śri Raṅgam
95. *Paramahamsa* Yogānandhar, California
96. Śri Yukthēśwarar, Pūri
97. Judge Swāmigaḷ, Pudukkōṭṭai
98. Mēl Maruvattur Āthi Paraśakthi temple, 21 Swāmigaḷ *Samādhi* are there
99. Kaṇṇappa Nāyanār, Kāḷahasti
100. Śivapragāsa Adigaḷ, Tirupaḻaiyarai Vadathali
101. Gurubaba Rāmdēv, 13 kms from Bōgarani
102. Rāṇi Sennammal, Pithanur, Koppulu mutt
103. Būjya Śri Siddha Narahari Guruji, Siddhāśramam (near Madurai Mariamman Theppakulam)
104. Kuḻandhaiyānandha Sāmigaḷ, Madurai Kalavāzal
105. Śri Muthu Vaduganāthar, Siṅgampunari
106. Rāmadēvar, Nāgapaṭṭiṇam
107. Aruṇagirināthar, Tiruvaṇṇāmalai
108. Pādagachērry Rāmaliṅga Sāmigaḷ, Puṇṇai Nallur Mariamman temple, Tañjavūr
109. Mouṉasāmi Siddhar, in between Tenkāsi to Seṅkottai route
110. Siruthoṇda Nāyanār, Tirusettāṅkudi
111. Odukathur Sāmigaḷ, in Ulsūr Lake, Bangalore
112. Vallanāṭṭu Mahāsiddhar, Vallanādu
113. Subramaniya Siddhar, Rettiyapatti
114. Om Śri Śivagñāna Bālasiddhar, Mailam Murugaṉ temple
115. Kambar, Nāttarasaṅgkōṭṭai
116. Om Śri Nāgaliṅga Sāmigaḷ, Ambalathadaiyār *Madam*, Pondy

117. Om Śri Sātha Nandha Sāmigaḷ, near Śri Sāradha Śivajñāna Pītam

118. Śri Yōgirām Suratkumar (Visiri Sāmigaḷ), Tiruvaṇṇāmalai

119. Śri Kōṭṭur Guru Sāmy, Kōṭṭūr near Sātthūr

120. Tagappaṉ Magaṉ *Samādhi*, Paṉaiyūr near Girivalam Vandha Nallur

121. Nārāyaṇa Sāmy Ayya *Samādhi*, Nāgarcoil

122. Bōdēndra Sāmigaḷ, Maruthānallur, Tañjāvūr dist.

123. Avathūtharoga Nivarthīśwara Sāmigal, Pūnamalle, Chennai

124. Vāṉmīga Nāthar, Ettikudi

125. Śri Thambikālaiyan Siddhar, Marundīśwara temple at Tiruvāṇmiyūr

126. Mēivaradha Thambirān Siddhar, 25 kms from Jayaṅkoṇdacholapuram of Trichy

127. Kuṛai Nāchiyār Mahān, Tiruvaṇṇāmalai

128. Śri Vālai Gurusāmy, Kommadi Kōṭṭai in Chidambaram

129. Bāmban Sāmigal, Tiruvāṇmiyūr

130. Kumārasāmy siddhar, Pūrandan Pāḷayam, Coimbatore

131. Periyāḻvār Sāmigaḷ, Aḻagar Koil (Madurai)

132. Māyamma Swāmigaḷ *Samādhi*, Kaṉṉiyākumari

133. Śri Vaḷḷalār Rāmaliṅga Sāmigaḷ, Vadalūr (Mēttukuppam Siddhivilagam) died.

134. Kola Sāmigal, near Kuriñjipādi bus stand

135. Suburāya Sāmigaḷ, Subburāya Sāmy Temple, Viḻappaḷḷam, Kuriñjipādi

136. Kalpaṭṭu Iyyā, Vadalūr.

Source :(*List prepared and donated by Mr. M. Kannan, 60, Māruthi Illam, Chettikula Theru, Tiruvaḷḷuvar Nagar, Pondy. Mobile: 9894142932 and A. Sāraṅgapāṇi (Sāra Tailor, Kuriñjipādi), 96, Eḻai Māriamman Koil St., Muthialpet, Pondy. Mobile: 9789687905. Printed at: Śri Murugan offset Printers, Muthialpet, Pondy, 9894850198)*

Appendix - 5

Samādhi Shrines of Contemporary Siddhas of South India

Name of the Siddha	Location	Place	Details
Sorakāya Swāmi	Nārāyaṇavaṉam	Āndhra Pradesh	3 Kms from Puthūr, near Tirupati
Gūru Rāghavēndrar Swāmy	Mantrālayam	Āndhra Pradesh	near the banks of Adhoni River
Aruṇchalaya Ayya	Sirunamalli	Arakkōṇam	Sirunamalli near (Nemili)
Amalānanda Sāmigaḷ Vimalānanda Sāmigaḷ	Nāgavedu	Arakkōṇam	Amalānanda Swāmigaḷ *Maḍam*, Nāgavedu (near Arakkōṇam)
Aruḷānanda Swāmigaḷ	Narasiṅgapūram	Arakkōṇam	Madālayam, Arakkōṇam to Kavanūr
Vīrabadhra Swāmy (Ayya Swāmy)	Aruppukōṭṭai	Aruppukōṭṭai	Near Pavadi Thoppu
Dakśiṇāmūrty Swāmy	Sokkaliṅgapūram	Aruppukōṭṭai	Near Sokkaliṅgapūram Nehru Park
Suppan Swāmiyar	Sokkaliṅgapūram	Aruppukōṭṭai	Near Kāmātchi Amman Temple
Ātmāṉanda Rāmasāmy	Sokkaliṅgapūram	Aruppukōṭṭai	Near Śivan Temple Pond - West side
Kadapāṛai Aḻagar Sāmi	Mēttu Guṇdu	Aruppukōṭṭai	Mēttu Guṇdu
Thakaram Thatti Thatha	Mēttu Guṇdu	Aruppukōṭṭai	At Mēttu Guṇdu - enroute Aruppukōṭṭai-Irukkaṅkudi
Puliyūrān Siddhar	Puliyūrān Village	Aruppukōṭṭai	10 Kms-Aruppukōṭṭai at Puliyūran
Reddi Swāmy	Kāttaṅgudi	Aruppukōṭṭai	15 Kms -Aruppukōṭṭai at Kāttaṅgudi
Kōṭṭūr Gūru Swāmy	Kōṭṭūr	Aruppukōṭṭai	Kōṭṭūr Village
Kandavēl Paradēśi	Vembūr	Aruppukōṭṭai	20 Kms- Aruppukōṭṭai-Ettayapūram
Āṛumugha Swāmy	Vadakku Nātham	Aruppukōṭṭai	Vadakku Nātham Village
Sadgūru SiddharSāmy	Kalpākkam	Chennai	Puthupaṭṭiṇam near Kalpākkam
Kaṉṉiyappa Swāmi	Ambattūr	Chennai	Ambathūr State Bank Colony
Aṇṇasāmi, Ratiṇasāmi Bākiyaliṅgam	VadaPaḻaṉi	Chennai	Vaḷḷi Tirumana Mantapam, Nerkundram Road, VadaPaḻaṉi
Mallayāsāmi	Aḻiñjivākkam	Chennai	near Kāranōdai-Kuchastalai Bridge
Karlakaṭṭai Siddhar	Pūnmallī	Chennai	Pūnmalle Vaithīsvaran Kōil
Aṉṉai Nīlammaiyār	Tirumullaivāyil	Chennai	North Māda Street,

Mahān Subbiah Sāmy	Tirukaḻukuṉṟam	Chennai	Near Tirukaḻukuṉṟam Bus Stand
Paṭṭiṉathār	Tiruvotṛiyūr	Chennai	Near Tiruvotṛiyūr Market Bus Stop. *Samādhi* is near the sea shore
Kuḻanthai Vēlāyudha Siddhar	Tirukachūr	Chennai	near Marunthīswarar Temple, Tirukachūr
Ambalavāṇa Sāmigaḷ	Vēlachērry	Chennai	Main Road (Gandhisālai tūrning)
Andhugūru Swāmigaḷ	Perambūr	Chennai	Perambūr Madhavaram High road
Eḻumalai Sāmigaḷ and Kollapūri Sāmigaḷ; Sāṅgu Siddha Śivaliṅga Nāyaṇar	Guindy	Chennai	No 36, Briṅgu Mānagar (opposite to Māṅgulam) M.K.N. Road, Guindy
Kōḻipi Swāmigaḷ (Śri Satyāṉanda)	Guindy	Chennai	Inside Saibaba Temple (near guindy bus stop)
Kuḻandaivēl Paradēśi Sāmigaḷ & Sanyāsi Subēdār	Ālandūr	Chennai	Abraham Nagar, Near EB Office
Muṉiappa Paradēśi Swāmigaḷ	Guindy	Chennai	Behind Mūridi's Coffee House (Presently Saṅgeetha Hotel),
Mūrugappa Sāmigaḷ @ Thaṅgavēl Sāmigaḷ	Kōdambākkam	Chennai	Near Śiva Temple, Vaḷḷiammāl Garden Main Rd, Reṅgarājapūram
Nāgamaṇi Adigaḷār	Kandan chāvadi	Chennai	Nagamani Adigalar Sālai, Cemetry
Nir Tisai Āṉandar (Muṉusami Mudaliār)	Kṛiśṇampet	Chennai	Gajapathy Lala Street, Kṛiśṇampet.
Ōmṅkarāṉanda	KK Nagar	Chennai	Śri Ōmkāra Swāmi *Maḍam*, *Gñānodaya Ālayam*, Kōdambākkam
Sarasvati Ammayār & Śrimad Chidambara Periya Swāmigaḷ	Velacherry	Chennai	1, Velachery Main Road (near Gandhisālai tūrning), (near Dandīsvarar temple).
Satchitāṉandar and Venugōpāla Sāmigaḷ	East Tāmbaram Rājakīḻpākkam	Chennai	Śri Agaṇda Paripūrṇa Satchidāṉanda Sabai Gūrukśētram
Thādikāra Swāmigaḷ	Ālandūr	Chennai	Thādikāra Sāmi Kōil street, Ālandūr
Vīrarāghavar	Tiruvotṛiyūr	Chennai	Tiruvotṛiyūr Cemetry
Vibūthi Bābā	Chitlapākkam	Chennai	1st Main Road, M.C. Nagar

Sarkarai Ammāl	Tiruvāṇmiyūr	Chennai	near Pāmban Swāmigaḷ temple
Pāmban Sāmigaḷ and Subramaṇya Dāsar	Tiruvāṇmiyūr	Chennai	Aruḷmighu Kumaragūrudāsar Tirukōil, Mayūrapūram
Vālmīki	Tiruvāṇmiyūr	Chennai	Opposite Marunthīswarar Temple
Ālavandhār	Nemili	Chennai	Ālavandhār Temple, Near Kōvalam.
Chidambara Sāmigaḷ	Tirupōrūr	Chennai	Tiruporūr Ādhīnam,Kandasāmy kōil
Mouṉa Swāmigaḷ	Tirupōrūr	Chennai	Kaṉṉuvārpēṭṭai, Tirupōrūr
Vīrama Muṉivar	Nuṅgambakkam	Chennai	Asalāthamman Kōil (police station)
Ādi Sēśāṉandha	Nuṅgambakkam	Chennai	Śiva Temple,Near Vaḷḷuvar Kōṭṭam
Gaṅgadhara Dēśikar	Chetpat	Chennai	Jaya Vinayakar Temple, Harrington Road 6th Avenue, Chetpat
Nadamuṉi Swāmigaḷ	Pachaiapa College	Chennai	Near Pachaiappa College
Mōti Bābā	Egmore	Chennai	Pantheon Sālai (O/o Commisioner)
Easūr Satchitāṉandar	Pūrasaiwalkkam	Chennai	Near Vasanthi Theatre
Vērkadalai Swāmigaḷ	Tiru Vi Ka Nagar	Chennai	Near Market, Tiru Vi Ka Nagar
Karapatra Śivaprakāsa Swāmigaḷ	Vyāsarpādi	Chennai	Opposite to Ambedkar College, Palla Street, Samiyar Thōṭṭam
Mahaliṅga Swāmigaḷ	Royapūram	Chennai	Śivan Kōil near Royapūram Bridge
Gūru Dakśiṇāmūrthy Swāmigaḷ	Thōṇdiārpet	Chennai	Gūru Dakśiṇāmūrthy Temple, Railway Colony,
Appudu Swāmigaḷ	Paṭṭiṇatār Kōil St	Chennai	Vaḷḷalar Temple, Paṭṭiṇathār Kōil St
Stanley Dargah	Royapūram	Chennai	Stanley Hospital, Royapūram
Hazrath Syed Mūsa Kadiri	Mount Road	Chennai	Opp to LIC
Rāj Bhavan Dargah	Guiṇdy	Chennai	Raj Bhavan, Guiṇdy
Sabāpathi Swāmigaḷ	Villivākkam	Chennai	Sāmiyār *Maḍam*, Villivākkam.
Kaṇṇappa Swāmigaḷ	Red Hills	Chennai	Kavaṅkarai
Shā-In-Shā Bābā	Red Hills	Chennai	Budūr, Red Hills
Appar Swāmigaḷ	Mylāpore	Chennai	Opp Sanskrit College. Royapetta Rd.

Muthuliṅga Sāmi and his disciples' *Samādhi*	Royapettah	Chennai	Śiva Temple (near hotel Swagath), R.H. Road,
Kuḻandaivēl Sāmy and Muthaiyah Sāmy	Mylāpore	Chennai	J.D.P Guild Building, Chitrai Kuḷam
Pūsalar	Tirunindravūr	Chennai	Aruḷmighu Irudayālīśvarar Kōil
Karkotaka Mahariṣi	Pūnmalle	Chennai	Vaidhyanāthar Temple
Karaikāl Ammaiyār	Tiruvālaṅgadu	Chennai	Śiva Temple
Malayala Swāmigaḷ	Gūduvāñchērry	Chennai	At Kāśi Viśvanāthar Temple
Udhadi Mahariṣi	Thakkōlam	Chennai	Śiva Temple, Thakkōlam.
Śiva Gñāna Bālayōgi	Mailam	Chennai	Mūruga Temple, Mailam
Padakachēry Rāmaliṅga Swāmy	Tiruvotṛiyūr	Chennai	Near to Paṭṭiṇathār *Samādhi*
Śrimat Sadhāṉanda Swāmigaḷ	Peruṅgulathūr	Chennai	Āśramam at Ālapākkam - Sadhāṉandapūram
Maṉṉivākkam Bābā	Maṉṉivākkam	Chennai	No 211, 6th street, Ramnagar
Rāmanātha Dīkśitar	Naṅganallūr	Chennai	Naṅganallūr
Vīra Subbaiah Sāmigaḷ (Disciple of Karapatra Śivaprakāsa Sāmigaḷ)	Vepery	Chennai	Opposite to Buvaneshwari Theatre in Pūrasalwakkam. Perambūr barracks road.
Tiruvaṇṇāmalai Adhīnam Sabapathy Swāmigaḷ	Mylapore	Chennai	Backside Vasantha Bhavan Hotel (near Kapalīśvarar Temple, Mylapore)
Sadai Ammā alais Kamalāmmāl	Tiruvotṛiyūr	Chennai	Śri Tiruvudai, Kodi Idai, Vadivudai Amman Kōil, Basin road, Chennai
Mouṉa Swāmigaḷ	Tiruvotṛiyūr	Chennai	Appar Kōil Street near cemetry
Kuppusāmi @ Avadhūta Swāmigaḷ	Tōṇdiārpet	Chennai	Vīrarāghava Swāmigaḷ *Samādhi* near Tiruvotṛiyūr cemetry
Sadai Swāmigaḷ	Tiruvotṛiyūr	Chennai	Sadai Swāmigaḷ *Jīva Samādhi*
Mahādevēndra Saraswati IV	Tiruvotṛiyūr	Chennai	Saṅkara *Maḍam* (Near Vadivudai amman temple)
Rōma Mahariṣi	Tiruvotṛiyūr	Chennai	Vadivudaiamman Temple
Rājarājēśwari Amma	Red hills	Chennai	Rājarājēśwari Amma *Samādhi* near Śri Kaṇṇappa Sāmi Temple
Gñānachāriyār Swāmigaḷ	Karanodai	Chennai	18 siddhar *Maḍam*, Karanodai (opposite to Gopikṛiśṇa Theatre),

Śrimat Ubaya Ityādi Rāmānuja Yathīśvarar	Vyāsarpādi	Chennai	Samiyar *Maḍam*, Vyāsarpādi
Madanagōpāla Swāmi	Perambūr	Chennai	Melpatti Ponappa Mudali Street, opp. Iśwari Kalyāṇa Maṇḍapam.
Ēkāmbaranāthar	Ayanāvaram	Chennai	Ekaṅkipūram, near Ayanāvaram Rāghavēndra temple (dilapidated)
Madūrai Swāmigaḷ	Sembiam	Chennai	*Maḍam* street near Venus Theatre
Mylai Natarāja Sāmi	Kolatūr Peravalūr	Chennai	behind Selliamman Temple
Śrimat Vēdāntam Puduvai Na Ethirājalu Swāmigaḷ	Erukancheri	Chennai	Ethirajalu Swāmi Street on the Erukañchēri main road.
Ayya Sūriyanātha Karuvūrar	Ambattūr	Chennai	18 Siddhar *Maḍam*, No 13, Kumāra Swāmy St, Varadharājapūram,
Mouṉa Swāmigaḷ	Ambattūr	Chennai	*Maḍam* is opp to Sakthi Theatre,
Māsilāmaṇi Sāmigaḷ	Tirumullaivoyil	Chennai	Chōlampēdu Tāmarai kuḷam, near Anjaneyar Kōil
Bhairava Siddhar	Pūnamallī	Chennai	Opp. Śri Varasiddhi Viṉāyagar Kōil
Garudakodi Siddhar	Pūnamallī	Chennai	Near Sundara Varadaraja Perumal Temple, Thandarai bus route and place is called as Siddharkādu.
Sarva Sarpa Siddhar	Govindarāja nagar	Chennai	Śri ŚivaSiddhar Temple, Māṅgādu
Sūrakai Swāmigaḷ	Tiruthaṉi	Chennai	Śri Sūrakai Swāmi *Maḍam*
Diṉakara Swāmigaḷ	Gūduvāñchēri	Chennai	Kalathumedu Śivan Kōil, nearer to *Samādhi* of Śri Malayāla Swāmigaḷ
Ethirāja Rājayōgi Swāmigaḷ	Ūrapākkam	Chennai	Karanaipuducheri village via Ūrapakkam.
Lord Govindās	G.P. Road	Chennai	*Jīva Samādhi,* Near Mahavir & Co
Appan Swāmigaḷ	Tiruvotṛiyūr	Chennai	Tiruvotṛiyūr
Śri Avadhūta Rōga Nivarthīśvara Swāmi	Pūnamallī	Chennai	*Jīva Samādhi Ālayam*, Pūnamallī
Śri Śivarāmaliṅga Sāmi	Āṉandāśramam	Chennai	Śivarāmaliṅga Sāmi *Jīva Samādhi*
Śri Pūchi Swāmigaḷ	Padinallūr	Chennai	Padinallūr Amman Temple
Śri Kōmaṇa Sāmiyār	Alamādhi	Chennai	Alamādhi Śivan Temple

Śri Kosakadai Sāmy	Tiruvotṛiyūr	Chennai	Kosakadai Sāmiyār *Samādhi*
Śri Mayil Āṇdavar	Tiruvotṛiyūr	Chennai	*Samādhi Ālayam*, Tiruvotṛiyūr.
Śri Siddhar Gaṇapati	Chennai	Chennai	Rajaji Hall opposite to PR & Sons
Śri Kaḻi Śivakaṇṇudaya Vaḷḷal	Chetpat	Chennai	Kaḻi Śivakaṇṇudaya Vaḷḷal *Jīva Samādhi Ālayam*
Śri Subramaṇya Sāmi	Śriperumputhūr	Chennai	*Jīva Samādhi*, Nīlamaṅgalam,
Śri Sundaramūrthy Swāmigaḷ	Oṅgūr	Chennai	Sundaramūrthy Swāmigaḷ *Jīva Samādhi Ālayam*,
High Coūrt Swāmi alias Appudusāmi	Tiruvotṛiyūr	Chennai	In the location of *Samādhi* of Pādakachēry Rāmaliṅga Swāmy
Pāmpan Swāmigaḷ	Tiruvānmiyūr	Chennai	Near Kalāśētra
Parañjōthi Mahān	Tiruvotṛiyūr	Chennai	Near Universal Peace Sanctuary
Jñāṉa Prakāsa Swāmi	Tiruvotṛiyūr	Chennai	Āśram is in North Māda Street
Guṇaṅgudi Mastān Sāhib	Rāyapūram	Chennai	Rāyapūram Vegetable Market back
Gūruliṅga Swāmy	Saidapet	Chennai	Karanīswarar Temple St
Māṉickavāsagar	Chidambaram	Chidambaram	near Natarāja temple
Mouṉa Swāmigaḷ	Sabānāyagar St.	Chidambaram	39, Sabānāyagar Street
Tirumāḷigai Dēvar	Tiruvāvaduthūrai	Chidambaram	Tiruvāvaduthūrai
Tirukālar Āṇdavar	Tirukālar	Chidambaram	near Tirukālar Śivan Temple
Kalpaṭṭu Ayya	Vadalūr	Chidambaram	Near Siddhivalagam, Vadalūr.
Jōthiliṅga Swāmigaḷ	Vadalūr	Chidambaram	Vadalūr
Rāmasāmi Siddhar	Vaḷḷalār nagar	Chidambaram	Sarva Siddhi Gñāna Sūriyan Tirusabai, Vadalūr
Gūru Namaśivāyar	Chidambaram	Chidambaram	Veṅgan St, Near Kāmarājar School
Maṛai Jñāna Sambandar	Siṅgārathōppu	Chidambaram	Near Indane Gas Godown,
Umāpathi Śivāchāriār	Chidambaram	Chidambaram	Behind Ambika Rice Mill, near Śrinivasa Theatre
Tirumūlar	Tiruvāvaduturai	Chidambaram	Kōmuktīswarar Temple
Avadhūthar Swāmy	Chidambaram	Chidambaram	Gūru Ayyar St., Near Nandavaṉam
Poṉṉambala Swāmy	Chidambaram	Chidambaram	Maṉṉārgudi Road, Chidambaram

Vaḷḷalār	Vadalūr	Chidambaram	Vadalūr
Saṭṭanāthar	Sīrkaḻi	Chidambaram	Sīrkaḻi Saṭṭanāthar Temple.
Kathirkāma Swāmy	Thenpāthi	Chidambaram	On the Banks of Uppana River
Daṉvaṇtri	Vaithīsvaran Kōil	Chidambaram	Śiva Temple,
Kumārasāmi Siddhar	Purandan Pāḷayam	Coimbatore	Pañchavēl Mūrugan Temple.
Kodi Swāmy	Puravipāḷayam	Pollāchi	In Puravipāḷayam Zamin Palace
Kalliyadi Bramham	Puthupaṭṭi	Dindugal	near Vada Madūrai
Otha Swāmy (Subbiah Swāmy)	Dindugal	Dindugal	West of Dindugal fort hill on the way to Muthaḻagu Paṭṭi
Nirvaṇa Mouṉagūru Swāmy	Kasavaṇampaṭṭi	Dindugal	In Kasavaṇampaṭṭi Āśram and *Samādhi* Kōil
Puṇṇākku Siddhar	Sennimalai	Erode	Inside Sennimalai Mūrugan Kōil
Śri Bagavān Nāma Bōdēndra	Riverbed	Govindapūram	14 kms from Kumbakōṇam
Magadi Siddhar	Tiruvithāṅkode	Kaliyakkāviḷai	Near Pudupaḷḷi Amarāvathi Karai
Sadgūru Śivasami	Kañchipuram	Kañchipuram	Veḷḷaikuḷam St., Periya Kañchi
Karapasavarāja Dēśikēndrar	Kañchipuram	Kañchipuram	5, Pañchupēṭṭai Small Street, Kañchipuram – 2
Kalaṅgināthar	Kañchipuram	Kañchipuram	Ēkāmparanāthar Temple
Kachiappa Muṉivar	Kañchipuram	Kañchipuram	Tiruvāvaduthūrai Āthīnam, Kañchi Piḷḷiayār Pāḷayam, Puthupāḷayam.
Śivasāmi@Pōdā Sāmi	Kañchipuram	Kañchipuram	Near cremation ground, Kañchi
Upaniṣad Bramēndrar	Kañchipuram	Kañchipuram	*Maḍam* is near Kailāsanāthar temple
Sumathīndra Tīrthar	Kañchipuram	Kañchipuram	Sumathīndra Thīrthar Brindāvaṉam
Tāṇḍavarāya Sāmigaḷ	Govindavādi	Kañchipuram	Tāṇḍavarāya Sāmigaḷ *Maḍam*
Kañchipuram Dargah	Kañchipuram	Kañchipuram	Kañchipuram
Patañjali Swāmigaḷ	Appūr	Kañchipuram	Siṅgaperumal Kōil-Appūr bus stand, near Agasthiar Āśramam
Rājarāja Bābā Siddhar	Vellarai village	Kañchipuram	near Kollathūr in Śriperumbudūr.

Aruḷveli Siddhar @ Sadgūru Bābā Swāmi	Śriperumbudūr	Kañchipuram	C/o Śri V. Dēvaraj, *Siddhar Kudil*, VGP Ramanujam Tower
Śri Odukathūr Swāmigaḷ	Ulsūr, Bangalore	Karnātaka	Daṇḍayudapāṇi Temple, 13, Gaṅgadara Chetty Road, Bangalore
Karuvūrār	Karūr	Karūr	Near Paśupathīsvarar Temple, Karūr
Sadāśiva Bramhēndra	Nerūr	Karūr	On the backside of Śiva Temple
Śri Vidyādhirāja Chattāmbi Swāmigaḷ	Edapallykotta	Kēraḷā	Between Kollam and Karunāgapaḷḷi
Śri Śivāṉanda Paramahamsar	Vadakarā	Kēraḷā	*Jīva Samādhi Ālayam*
Śri Rāmadās Sāmigaḷ	Kañjaṅkādu	Kēraḷā	*Jīva Samādhi Ālayam*
Aryamba Dēvi	Kāladi	Kēraḷā	Saṅkarāchārya *Maḍam*
Nirmalāṉanda Yōgi; Brahmāṉanda Swāmi Śivayōgi; and Yōgini Mātha	Ālathūr	Kēraḷā	Brahamanda Swāmi Śivayōgi Āśram, Ālathūr
Kṛiśṇa Vāthiyar; Māthru Jada Vallabar; Viśvanātha Bāgavathar Vaidyanātha Vādhyar; Chellappa Dīkśidar and Yāgnēndra Dīkśidar	Pālakkad	Kēraḷā	On the banks of Soka Nasini River, Pālakkad
Srī Vidhyāhirāja Chattāmbi Swāmikal	Panmana	Kēraḷā	16 kms north of Quilon
Saṅgu Swāmy	Pasuvanthanai	Kovilpatti	25 Kms from Kōvilpaṭṭi
Ūthupaṭṭi Swāmy	Ūthupaṭṭi	Kovilpaṭṭi	10 Kms,Kōvilpaṭṭi-Gūrumalai route
Subramaṇiya Gūru	Kaḻugumalai	Kovilpaṭṭi	Āṛumuga Nagar, Nr. New Bus Stand
Śri Vijayēndra Swāmigaḷ	Kumbakōṇam	Kumbakōṇam	*Gūru* of Śri Rāgavēdra Swāmigaḷ - at Solaiappa St,
5 Vaiṣṇava Āchāryās	Āthanūr	Kumbakōṇam	Āthanūr at Kumbakōṇam
Muñji Kēsa Muṉivar	Tiruvāḷaṅgādu	Kumbakōṇam	Munji Kesa Muṉivar *Ālayam*
Siddha Agathiyar and Śri Gōvinda Dīkśithar	Kumbakōṇam	Kumbakōṇam	Ādi Kumbēśvarar Temple
Śivāṉandar and Paramāṉandar - disciples of Kañjanūr Suyamprakāsar	Kañchanūr	Kumbakōṇam	In the Kāsi Viśvanāthar temple, near Suayamprakāsar's *Samādhi*

Mouṉa Swāmy and Aruṇāchala Swāmy	Kumbakōṇam	Kumbakōṇam	Mouṉa Swāmy *Maḍam*, Near Kumbēśvarar Kōil
Virālimalai Sadaśiva Swāmy	Tirupuvaṉam	Kumbakōṇam	Near Śivan Temple,
Sachidāṉanda Swāmi	Swāmimalai	Kumbakōṇam	Banks of Kāviri River, inside Govt. HSc School.
Chaithanya Śivam	Āduthūṟai	Kumbakōṇam	towards Āduthūrai-Sūryanār Kōil. Amman Temple near the bridge.
Hara Hanthar	Kañchanūr	Kumbakōṇam	North West of Maniyakuḷakkarai
Suyam Prakāsar and Vaithyaliṅga Swāmy	Kañchanūr	Kumbakōṇam	South of Maṇiykuḷakkarai in Kañchanūr - Kāsi Viśvanāthar Kōil
Kārai Siddhar	Āṇdān Kōil	Kumbakōṇam	Hanuman Temple backside
Rōma Riṣi	Kūnthalūr	Kumbakōṇam	Jambukāranyēśvarar Temple
Mūṭṭai Swāmigaḷ	Tiruparaṅkundram	Madu	Mūṭṭai Swāmigaḷ *Maḍam*
Sundarāṉandar	Madūrai	Maduari	Mīṉākśi Amman Temple
Śri Muṉiyandi Swāmi	K.Reṅgapalayam	Madūrai	25 Kms from Madūrai
Talaivirichān Sāmigaḷ	Kākkāthōppu	Madūrai	Talaivirichān *Maḍam*
Nakīrar	Madūrai	Madūrai	Śiva Temple, Saṅgapulavar Temple, West Māsi Street
Muthu Piḷḷai	Kākkāthōpu	Madūrai	Subēdār mutt, Talaivirichān *Maḍam*
Veḷḷaiyāh Swāmi	Simmakkal	Madūrai	Veḷḷaiyāh Swāmi *Maḍam*
Brahmāṉanda Swāmi	Avaṉiyāpūram	Madūrai	Below Avaṉiyāpūram Bridge
Kuṭṭiah Swāmi	Madūrai	Madūrai	Kuṭṭiah Sāmi *Maḍam*, South Veli St
Vivekāṉanda Swāmi	Āṇdālpūram	Madūrai	Below Āṇdālpūram Bridge
1008 Sūrēndra Brahma Niśta Śivāṉanda Sāmy	Āṇdālpūram	Madūrai	Adjacent to Vivekāṉanda Swāmi *Maḍam*, Below Andalpūram Bridge
Śridharēndra Swāmigaḷ	Simmakkal	Madūrai	Dakśiṇāmūrthi *Maḍam*, Vyāsarāya *Maḍam*, Pēchiamman Paditūrai
Tiruvāduturai Ādīnam 2nd Pītatipati	Madūrai	Madūrai	Behind Central Cinema
Kuḻandai Āṉanda Sāmi	Kalavāsal	Madūrai	Āṉandar *Maḍam*, Near V.V complex
Tiruparaṅkuṉṟam Dargah	Tiruparaṅkuṉṟam	Madūrai	Tiruparaṅkuṉṟam Hill

Machamuṉi Siddhar	Tiruparaṅkuṉṟam	Madūrai	Kāsi Viśwanāthar Temple
Gōripāḷayam Dargah	Gōripāḷayam	Madūrai	Gōripāḷayam
Nataṉa Gōpāla Nāyagi Swāmigaḷ	Katha Kiṉaṟu	Madūrai	on the way to Aḻakar Kōil from Periyār bus stand
Saṭṭaināthar	Tiruvēdagam	Madūrai	Saṭṭaināthar *Maḍam*
Aruḷāṉanda Siddhar	Chōḻavandān	Madūrai	Kiṉṉi *Maḍam*, Backside of Janaka Mariamman Temple
Gñāṉa Dēśikar	Chōḻavandān	Madūrai	Gñāṉiyār *Maḍam*
Othai Jadai Swāmigaḷ	Kodimaṅgalam	Madūrai	Othai Jadai Swāmigaḷ Mutt
Kāsinātha Gñānāchāriyār	Tirupuvaṉam	Madūrai	Kasinātha Gñānāchāriyār *Maḍam*, Tirupūvanam
Eli Swāmi	T.Kallupaṭṭi	Madūrai	Peraiyūr (near T.Kallupaṭṭi)
Pāttaiyah Swāmi and Pāl Paḻakari	T.Kallupaṭṭi	Madūrai	Sālichandai
Śri Kamalāṉandhar	K.Reṅgapalayam	Madūrai	At Selliamman Kōil, T.Kuṉṉāthūr
Mūkiah Swāmigaḷ	Tiruparaṅkuṉṟam	Madūrai	Behind Tyagarāja Engg. College
Śri Kaḷi Sitrambala Nādigal	Siddharkādu	Mayilāduturai	Sitrambala Nādigal Madālayam, Siddharkādu
Pāl Swāmy	Kūṟainādu	Mayilāduturai	Tirumañchana Street, Mayilāduturai
Manivasaga Swāmy	Kūṟainādu	Mayilāduturai	Banks of Kaveri River at Kūṟainādu
Sudukattu Swāmy	Mayilāduturai	Mayilāduturai	Door No:25, Darumapūram Sālai, Mayilāduturai
Yōga Abhirami Ammaiyār	Mayilāduturai	Mayilāduturai	Mūrugan Temple, Kacheri Street, Mayilāduturai.
Kuthampai Siddhar	Mayilāduturai	Mayilāduturai	Śiva Temple
Pāi Kaṭṭi Swāmy	Mayilāduturai	Mayilāduturai	Mayilāduturai GH Compound.
Kāḻi Sitrambala Swāmigaḷ	Siddharkādu	Mayilāduturai	Siddharkādu, Mayilāduturai
Ūrikaṭṭi Swāmi	Kuthālam	Mayilāduturai	Śētrapālapuram, Kuthālam.
Road Swāmy @ Śivarāmakṛiśṇa Sāmy	Mathirimaṅgalam	Mayilāduturai	South of rice mill, 12 Kms from Mayilāduturai.
Sēthu Bhāva Swāmy	Kuthālam	Mayilāduturai	Inside a saw mill in between Kuthālam-Tirumañchērry.
Nāga Nātha Swāmy	Vadakkan Paṭṭi	Melūr	From Melūr-Ēriyūr-Tiruppathūr Rd.
Kōrakkar Siddhar	Vada PoikaiNallūr	Nāgapaṭṭiṇam	6 Kms from Nāgapaṭṭiṇam

A̱lukuni Siddhar	Nāgapaṭṭiṇam	Nāgapaṭṭiṇam	Nīlayatatchi Devi and Śiva Temple
Vānmīgar	Ettukudi	Nāgapaṭṭiṇam	Ettukudi
Puṇḍariga Mahariṣi	Nāgapaṭṭiṇam	Nāgapaṭṭiṇam	Kayarōgaṇam Śiva Temple,
Kāsiliṅga Swāmi and Saṅkara Liṅga Sāmi	Amaraviḷai	Nāgerkōil	2 Km from Amaraviḷai Sales Tax Check Post
Mouṉagūru Swāmy	Neyūr	Nāgerkōil	1 Km to Maṇdaikādu, Lakśmipūram
Bhairava Siddhar	Maṇdaikādu	Nāgerkōil	Maṇdaikādu Bagavati Kōil
Vaiguṇḍar Ayya	Swāmithōppu	Nāgerkōil	10 Kms from Nāgerkōil
SadgūruNāyaṇār Sāmi	Maruthuva Malai	Nāgerkōil	Foothills,Maruthuvamalai, Pothayadi
Tūravi Veri Govindasamy	Reddiāpatti Kanthagiri	Nāmakkal	Mūrugan Temple on hilltop. 3 Km Enroute Namakkal-Tuṛaiyūr
Suyam Prakāsa Sāmi	Dhathagiri	Nāmakkal	near Dathātrēyar Temple
Bōgar Siddhar	Pa̱laṉi	Pa̱laṉi	Pa̱laṉi Mūrugan Temple
Sādhu Swāmigaḷ	Pa̱laṉi	Pa̱laṉi	Sādhu Swāmigaḷ *Maḍam*
Īswara Paṭṭar	Pa̱laṉi	Pa̱laṉi	near Arts College
Aruḷ Nandhi Śivāchāriyar	Tiruthalūr	Pandrutti	Opposite to Śivan Temple. 10 Kms from Pandrutti.
Meikaṇdār	Tiruvennainallūr	Pandrutti	North St., 20 Km from Tirukōilūr.
A̱lukku Swāmy	Vēṭṭaikāranputhūr	Pollāchi	Uppa River,Vēṭṭaikara Sāmi Temple
Siddhānanda Swāmy	Karuvadi Kuppam	Puduchērry	opp to Fatima H.Sc school
Śri Thoḷḷakādhu Sāmy	Puduchērry	Puduchērry	Maṇakkuḷa Viṉāyakar Temple,
Śri Akkā Swāmigaḷ	Muthiālpēṭṭai	Puduchērry	Near Ajantha Theatre,Kutiraikulam
Nāgaliṅga Swāmigaḷ	Puduchērry	Puduchērry	Ambalathadiyar Madathu St.
Kathirvēl Swāmigaḷ	Sithaṅkudi	Puduchērry	Near Balaji Theatre
Śaktivēl Paramāṉanda Swāmi	Kārāmaṇikuppam	Puduchērry	Near Railway gate & Petrol Bunk
Kambili Swāmigaḷ	Thattāñchā vadi	Puduchērry	Kambili Swāmigaḷ Temple,
Dakśiṇāmūrthy Sāmy	Thennal	Puduchērry	Thennal, Pondy-Vi̱lupuram Road.
Subramaṇya Abinava Satchidānanda Bhārathi	Ellapiḷḷaichāvadi	Puduchērry	Subramaṇya Abinava Satchidānanda Bhārathi Temple, Near Nellithōppu,
Badē Sāhib	Chiṉṉa Bābu Samudram	Puduchērry	Badē Sāhib Dargah, Chiṉṉa Bābu Samudram

Theṅgai Swāmigaḷ	Arumāthapūram	Puduchērry	Opp to Electricity sub-station
Rām Paradēsi Swāmy	Arumāthapūram	Puduchērry	Near Railway Gate, Villiyanūr
Śri Śivaprakāsa Sāmy	Nallāṟṟūr	Puduchērry	Near Pākkam Kūtrode & Embalam
Śri Gūrusāmy Ammāl	Ariyūr	Puduchērry	Pondy-Viḻupūram highways
Aūrobindo & Mother	Puduchērry	Puduchērry	Aūrobindo Āśram
The Divine Mother	Puduchērry	Puduchērry	Aūroville, Puduchērry
Judge Swāmy	Pudukōṭṭai	Pudukōṭṭai	Bhuvanēśwari Amman Temple
Kōdaganallūr Sundara Swāmi	Arimaḻam Village	Pudukōṭṭai	16 Kms from Pudukōṭṭai. Friend of Vaḷḷalār & Sundaram Piḷḷai's Gūru
Sūruḷi Swāmi	Vadukapaṭṭi	Pudukōṭṭai	near Kīranūr, to Pudukōṭṭai-Trichy
Gūru Sāmy; Śivakāmi Jñāṉiyār; Ārumugha Sāmy; Poṉṉappa Jñāṉiyār and Karuppa Jñāṉiyār	Rājapālayam	Rājapālayam	Ambala Puli Bazar, Rājapālyam
Chithiramuthu Adigaḷ	Paṉaikuḷam	Rāmanāthapūram	near Rāmanāthapūram
Kumarāṇḍi Swāmy	Rājapālayam	Rājapālayam	near PSK Park, Vivekāṉanda Street
Aruṇachala chempaṭṭi Jñāniyār	Sathirapaṭṭi	Rājapālayam	Sathirapaṭṭi
Subramaṇiyar	Sathirapaṭṭi	Rājapālayam	Vēdānta *Maḍam*, Sathirapaṭṭi
Tāyumāṉavar Swāmi	Velipaṭṭiṇam Lakśmipūram	Rāmanāthapūram	North side of Rāmanāthapūram - Velipaṭṭiṇam Lakshmipūram
Aruḷmighu Chellappa Sāmigaḷ	Ekkakudi near Utharakosamaṅgai	Rāmanāthapūram	Gūru of Śri Sūttukōl Mayandi Swāmigaḷ
Patañjali Siddhar	Rāmēśwaram	Rāmēśwaram	In Rāmaliṅga Swāmi Temple
Māyamma	Salem	Salem	Enroute to Salem-Yērkādu opposite to Modern Theatre Cinema Studio
Kañcamalai Siddhar	Kañcamalai	Salem	Foothills of Kañcamalai - Siddhēśwara Swāmy Temple
Sadāṉandha Swāmi	Skandāśramam	Salem	Sūttukkōl Māyāṇdi Svāmi's disciple
Pāvai Ammal	Jagiramapālayam	Salem	Śri Kāvadi Paḻaṉi Āṇdavar Āśram

Pāmpāṭṭi Siddhar	Saṅkaran Kōil	Saṅkaran Kōil	Saṅkaran Kōil-Puḷiyaṅkudi route
Saṅkaranārāyaṇan and Dakśiṇāmūrthy	Panayūr	Saṅkaran Kōil	7 Kms from Karivalam Vanthanallūr near Saṅkaran Kōil
Pañcamūrthy (Pothi Swāmy)	Karivalam Vanthanallūr	Saṅkaran Kōil	Karivalam Vanthanallūr - Enroute Saṅkaran Kōil-Rājapālayam
Sennikulam Aṇṇāmalai Reddiār	Sennikulam	Saṅkaran Kōil	3 Kms from Karivalam Vanthanallūr
Mādhavānanda Sāmy	Pampākkōil	Saṅkaran Kōil	Near Railway Station
Mūvar *Samādhi*	Tāṇipāṛai	Sathūragiri	near Pēchiamman Kōil at foothills
Virālimalai Āṛumuga Swāmy	Kōṭṭaiyūr	Śivagaṅgai	In Kōṭṭaiyūr Town Extension.3 Kms from Kāraikudi
Vāthiyār Swāmy @ Muthu Vadukanāthar	Siṅgampunari	Śivagaṅgai	Near Bus Stand. 20 Kms from Tirupathūr
Sadāśiva Bramēndrar	Māṉāmadūrai	Śivagaṅgai	Sōmanāthar Kōil, Śivagaṅga, 18 km
Kālimuthu Swāmy	S.Rāmachandra-pūram	Śrivilliputhūr	15 Kms from Śrivilliputhūr
KailāsaSundara Sāmy	Śrivilliputhūr	Śrivilliputhūr	Kaikāṭṭi Temple. Śivakāsi Road
Ponnayiram Swāmy	Śrivilliputhūr	Śrivilliputhūr	Ūranai Patti Street in Śrivilliputhūr
Nārāyaṇa Tīrtha Sāmi	Tirupūnthūruthi	Tañjāvūr	Nārāyaṇa Tīrtha Madālayam
Kāśyapa Muṉivar	Tirupūnthūruthi	Tañjāvūr	Kāsi *Maḍam*
Saṅkarānandar	Tirupūnthūruthi	Tañjāvūr	Near Kāsi *Maḍam*
Tyāga Brahma Swāmi	Tiruvaiyāṛu	Tañjāvūr	Thyāgarājar *Maḍam*, Tiruvaiyāṛu
Agappēy Siddhar	Tiruvaiyāṛu	Tañjāvūr	Pañcanadīsvarar Kōil, Tiruvaiyāṛu
Saṭṭai Muṉivar	Sīrkaḻi	Tañjāvūr	Saṭṭaināthar Temple
TiruGñāna Sambandar	Sīrkaḻi	Tañjāvūr	Sambandar *Maḍam*, Achalpūram
Bhadragiriyār	Tiruvidaimaruthūr	Tañjāvūr	Mahaliṅgēśvarar Temple
Ādi Śivaprakāsa Sāmi	Muḻiyar	Tañjāvūr	near Tirunāgēśvaram
Haradathar	Kañjanūr	Tañjāvūr	Haradathar Temple
Śri Śridara Ayyā	Tiruvidaimaruthūr	Tañjāvūr	Mahaliṅgēśvarar Temple
Pāl Swāmy	Karanthai	Tañjāvūr	Old Tiruvaiyāṛu Road

Akapēyi Siddhar	Tiruvaiyāṛu	Tañjāvūr	Inside the Śiva Temple
Siddēśar	Tiruvaiyāṛu	Tañjāvūr	Opp to Iyyārappar Temple
Siṅgapore Swāmy (Mūrugēsan Sāmi)	Tiruvaiyāṛu	Tañjāvūr	Siṅgapore Swāmy *Maḍam*, Tiruvaiyāṛu
Āṇdār Swāmy	Tiruvaiyāṛu	Tañjāvūr	Mēlamādavilakom
Veṅkata Subbaiā Sāmi	Paṭṭukōṭṭai	Tañjāvūr	in the midst of Paṭṭukkōṭṭai Town
Ambalavāṇa Swāmy	Tillaivilāgam	Tañjāvūr	Vadakādu (near Paṭṭukōṭṭai)
Kaduveli Siddhar	Kaduveli	Tañjāvūr	2 km,Tiruvaiyāṛu-Tirukāṭṭupaḷḷi Rd.
Sadgūru Gaṇapathi Swāmy	Teṅkāsi	Teṅkāsi	Inside Mūrugan Cement Works Compound, Teṅkāsi.
Śivakāmi Paradēsi Ammayār	Tirumalaikōil	Teṅkāsi	In Vandādum Poṭṭal near Tirumalai Mūrugan Kōil
Ārumuga Swāmy	Pranūr	Teṅkāsi	Near River Bridge
Saṅkarānantha Sāmy	Kutṛālam	Teṅkāsi	Saṅkara Āśram
Chandira Swāmy	Kadayanallūr	Teṅkāsi	Near Hanuman Temple
Śri Mouṉa Swāmi; Śri Trivikrama Rāmānanda Bhārathi and Śri Vimalānanda Bhārathi	Kutṛālam	Teṅkāsi	Śri Siddhēśvari Pītham, Mouṉa Swāmy Maḍam, Dattātreya Āśram, Kutṛālam
Idaikādar	Tiruvaṇṇāmalai	Tiruvaṇṇāmalai	Adi Aṇṇāmalai,
Gugai Namachivāyar	Tiruvaṇṇāmalai	Tiruvaṇṇāmalai	Mulaipāl Tīrtham, T.V.Malai Hill.
Virupākśi Dēvar	Tiruvaṇṇāmalai	Tiruvaṇṇāmalai	Near to Gugai Namachivāyar *Samādhi* at T.V.malai Hill
Deivasikāmaṇi Sāmy	Vēṭṭavalam	Tiruvaṇṇāmalai	1.5 Kms from Paṇdariyār Kalyāṇa Maṇḍapam
Īsānya Dēvar	Avalūrpēṭṭai	Tiruvaṇṇāmalai	on Avalūrpēṭṭai Girivala Route.
Esakki Swāmy	Tiruvaṇṇāmalai	Tiruvaṇṇāmalai	In Girivala Rd. Pañchamuka Darśan
Adimudi Siddhar (Āṛumugha Swāmy)	Tiruvaṇṇāmalai	Tiruvaṇṇāmalai	Opposite to Dhūrvasar Temple on Aṇṇāmalai Girivala Route
Ammani Ammal	Tiruvaṇṇāmalai	Tiruvaṇṇāmalai	in Girivala Rd. Opp. Isānya Liṅgam.
Aḻagāṉanda Swāmy	Tiruvaṇṇāmalai	Tiruvaṇṇāmalai	Pavaḻakuṉdru Madālayam near Dūrgai Amman Temple
Baghavān Śri Ramaṇa	Tiruvaṇṇāmalai	Tiruvaṇṇāmalai	Śri Ramaṇāśramam, Tiruvaṇṇāmalai
Śri Sēśādhri Swāmy	Tiruvaṇṇāmalai	Tiruvaṇṇāmalai	Śri Sēśādhri Āśram

Yōgi Rām SūratKumar	Tiruvaṇṇāmalai	Tiruvaṇṇāmalai	Śri Yōgiram Āśram,Tiruvaṇṇāmalai
Vittōbāh Swāmy	Pōlūr	Tiruvaṇṇāmalai	33 Kms, Tiruvaṇṇāmalai-Vēlūr
Pūṇdi Mahan	Pūṇdi	Tiruvaṇṇāmalai	Pūṇdi Village near Kalasapākkam
Paḻaṉi Swāmy & Erai Swāmy	Avalūrpēṭṭai	Tiruvaṇṇāmalai	Near Gaṇapathi Temple in Sandhai Mēdu
Sadgūru Swāmy	Kanalappādi	Tiruvaṇṇāmalai	between Tiruvaṇṇāmalai and Senji
Aṇṇan Aruṇāchala Swāmigaḷ	Puthūr	Tiruvārūr	Puthūr village in Tiruvārūr, Opp to the rice mill
Sudukāṭṭu Swāmigaḷ	Māyavaram	Tiruvārūr	Rājan Thōṭṭam,Thimmana Nāicker
Tāṇḍavarāya Swāmy & Nārāyaṇa Swāmy	Nannilam	Tiruvārūr	Main Bazar, Nannilam. 18 Kms from Tiruvārūr
Chiṉṉān Swāmy	Sanna Nallūr	Tiruvārūr	between Tiruvārūr - Mayilāduturai
Rāmiah Swāmy	Vanchiyam	Tiruvārūr	In Pāppanamchērry near Vanchiyam
Vaṭṭār Mouṇagūru Swāmy	Mannārkudi	Tiruvārūr	Thenvadal 6th Street, Mannarkudi near Gopinātha Perumal Temple
Rāmāṉanda Bramēndrar	Seṅgalipūram	Tiruvārūr	Seṅgalipūram. 4 Kms from Kudavāsal
Dakśiṇāmūrthy	Tiruvārūr	Tiruvārūr	Mādappūram, Tiruvārūr
Kamala Muṉi Siddhar	Tiruvārūr	Tiruvārūr	Tiruvārūr Āṉandīsvarar Sannidhi
Koṅgaṇa Siddhar	Tiruvāvaduturai	Tiruvāvaduturai	In a pond near IOB, known as Koṅgaṇēśvarar Thōppu.
Tirumāḷigai Thevar	Tiruvāvaduturai	Tiruvāvaduturai	In Tiruvāvaduturai *Āthīnam*
1.Mouṉa Gūru Sāmy 2. Kāsi Swāmy 3. Ārumugha Swāmy	Tiruchendūr	Tiruchendūr	Opposite to Mūrugan Temple
Saṅkara Swāmi	Tiruchendūr	Tiruchendūr	On the beach, south to where Sūrasamhara festival ensue
Sadgūru Samhāra Mūrthy Swāmy	Tiruchendūr	Tiruchendūr	Near Saṅkara Swāmi *Samādhi*
Jñāṉiyār Adigaḷ	Kulasēkarapatṇam	Tiruchendūr	14 Kms from Tiruchendūr
Eral AruṇāchalaSāmy	Eral	Tiruchendūr	6 Kms, Tiruchendūr-Tuticorin route
Brahma Gñāna Gūrubirān Ayyanpaṭṭi Saṅkara Swāmigaḷ	Tiruchendūr	Tiruchendūr	*Jīva Samādhi* at Ayyanpaṭṭi Saṅkara Swāmigaḷ *Maḍam*, Tiruchendūr

Taḍiyillā Siddhar	Pēṭṭai	Tirunelvēli	At end of Pēṭṭai, in Tirunelveli town
Nīlakaṇta Dīkśidar	Pa<u>l</u>amadai	Tirunelvēli	in Kāsi Viśvanāthar Temple- 14 Kms
Apparā<u>n</u>anthar	Nettūr	Tirunelvēli	from Ālamkuḷam, Nettūr (8 Kms)
Vallanādu Chidambara Swāmy	Vallanādu	Tirunelvēli	Vallanādu enroute Tirunelveli-Tuticorin
Kaṭṭikuḷam Māyāṇdi	Tiruparaṅku<u>n</u>ṛam	Tiruparaṅku<u>n</u>ṛam	Thyāgaraja Engg. College back side,
Sōmappa Swāmy	Tiruparaṅku<u>n</u>ṛam	Tiruparaṅku<u>n</u>ṛam	From Māyāṇdi Swāmy *Samādhi* to Mūrugan Temple at hills
Machamu<u>n</u>i Siddhar	Tiruparaṅku<u>n</u>ṛam	Tiruparaṅku<u>n</u>ṛam	Tiruparaṅkundram Mūrugan Temple
Isanya Gñāna Desikar	Tiruvaṇṇāmalai	Tiruvaṇṇāmalai	Īsānya *Maḍam*, Giri Valam Route
Adi Mudi Siddhar	Tiruvaṇṇāmalai	Tiruvaṇṇāmalai	On Giri Valam Route, T.V.Malai
Isakki Siddhar	Tiruvaṇṇāmalai	Tiruvaṇṇāmalai	On Giri Valam Route, T.V.Malai
Vettaveli Swāmigaḷ	Athimūr	Tiruvaṇṇāmalai	Athimūr (on the way from Pōlūr to Javvādu Malai)
Śri Masthān Swāmy (Ramaṇa's disciple)	Desūr	Tiruvaṇṇāmalai	Dēsūr 17 Kms from Tiruvaṇṇāmalai.
Śri Swayam-prakāsā<u>n</u>anda Saraswati Swāmi (Ālaṅgudi Periyavār)	Mudikoṇdān	Tiruvārūr	Nama Dwār, New No.51, Old No.24, 7th Avenue, Ashok Nagar, Chennai
Aruḷmighu Sūṭṭukkol Rāmaliṅga Swāmigaḷ	Mannārgudi	Tiruvārūr	30/4 Gōpāla Samuthiram North St.
Makkan Swāmy	Trichy	Trichy	to Oyamari,from Sathiram Busstand
Yōgēśvara Swāmy (Rāmakṛiśṇa Sāmy)	Pi<u>nn</u>a Vāsal	Trichy	In Pa<u>l</u>guni River Banks, Pi<u>nn</u>avāsal.
Nārāyaṇa Brahmēndrar	Kāṭṭuputhūr	Trichy	14 Kms from Thottiyam - North of Kaveri River, Trichy - Salem route
Talai Āṭṭi Siddhar	Perambalūr	Trichy	In Mūsa Kōṭṭai Āśramam, Bramha Riṣi Hills. 60 Kms from Trichy
Meivara Thampirān	Senthūrai	Trichy	Pa<u>l</u>a<u>n</u>iyāṇdavar Temple, Senthūrai
Śri Rāmā<u>n</u>ujar	Śri Raṅgam	Trichy	In Śriraṅgam Temple, near Trichy

Śri Nārāyaṇa Gūru	Varkāla	Trivandrum	60 Kms from Trivandrum,Varkāla,
Brahmaśrī Nīlakaṇta Gūrupādar	Cheṅkottukōṇam	Trivandrum	Srī Rāmadāsa Mission, Srī Nīlakaṇtapūram
Śri Śivaraja *Yōgi* Ayya Swāmikal	Thycaud	Trivandrum	Śivan Kōil, Thycaud Trivandrum near Thycaud cremation ground
Śri Erithavūr Siddhar	Erithavūr – Bālarāmapūram	Trivandrum	Daṇḍāyudapāṇi kōil – Trivandrum (20 km), Temple is near Bālapūram
Lakśmi Ammāl	Viḻiñjam	Trivandrum	25 Kms from Trivandrum. Inside Muppanthal Isakki Amman temple
Dr Mystic Selvam	Mudivaithānēndal	Tuticorin	23 Kms. From Śrivaikuṇḍam
Reddiāpaṭṭi Swāmigaḷ	Vilathikulam	Tuticorin	Nāgalāpūram. Aruppukōṭṭai 31 Kms
Nallappa Swāmi	Vilathikulam	Tuticorin	Behind Vilathikulam MLA Quarters
ŚriRāmaliṅga Adigaḷ		Vadalūr	Vaḷḷalār
Śri Muthukṛiśṇa Sāmi	Vaḷḷiyūr	Vaḷḷiyūr	In Vaḷḷiyūr itself
Amutha Siddhar @Puṇṇākku Siddhar *and* Narasimma Swāmigaḷ	Nallan Paṭṭaṛai	Vēlūr	Diṉakaran Bus Stop Vēlūr
Sāthukara Swāmigaḷ	Saidapet	Vēlūr	Sāthugara Swāmigaḷ *Maḍam*
Śri Rāmagiri Yōgīswarar	Contonment Railway Station	Vēlūr	near Aṅkāḷa Paramēśwari Temple
Vilakśāṉanthar	Melmayil	Vēlūr	*Samādhi*, 15 kms from Vēlūr
Subbaiyah Swāmigaḷ and Balaji @ Vīra Śivaji Swāmigaḷ	New Bus Stand Back Side	Vēlūr	Subbaiyah Swāmigaḷ *Samādhi*
Kōṇi Swāmigaḷ	Tiruvallam	Vēlūr	Śivāṉanda Mouṉa Swāmigaḷ Kōil
Tirupugaḻ Satchidāṉanda	Vaḷḷimalai	Vēlūr	Poṅgi Temple, Vaḷḷimalai
Śripathi Thīrthar	Vēlūr	Vēlūr	Raghavendra Brindavanam, On the banks of River Pālār, Vēlūr
Achu Dāsar	Kaṇṇamaṅgalam	Vēlūr	*Maḍam*, is at Kaṇṇamaṅgalam
Kuppuswāmy Dēśikar	Tiruviriñjipūram	Vēlūr	Tiruviriñjipūram
Vaḷḷimalai Tirupugaḻ	Vaḷḷimalai	Vēlūr	Tirupugaḻ Āśram, Mūrugan

Swāmy			Temple. 25 Kms from Vēlūr.
Thāṅgal Mouṉagūru Swāmy	Thāṅgal	Vēlūr	37 Kms from Vēlūr.
Tiru Mūruga Kirubāṉandavāriār	Kāṅgēyanallūr	Vēlūr	Opposite to Mūrugan Temple, Kāṅgēyanallūr. 7 Kms from Vēlūr
Om Namaśivāya Swāmy	Paśumāthūr	Vēlūr	(*Samādhi)* 25 Kms from Vēlūr
Thoubah Swāmy	Vēlūr	Vēlūr	Saidapet Main Bazar,Vēlūr
Śivāṉanda Mouṉagūru Swāmi	Tiruvallam	Vēlūr	near Vilvanātha Īśvara Temple, Tiruvallam. 16 Kms from Vēlūr
Sanakar	Tiruvallam	Vēlūr	Opp. to Vilvanātha Temple
Egaṅgi Gōpāla Rāmanuja Dāsar Swāmigaḷ	Paḻamathi Malai	Vēlūr	*Mahā Samādhi*
Bālaiah Śivapragāsa Swāmigaḷ	Mailam	Viḻupūram	Mailam to Pondy Road
Kuṇḍali Muṉivar	Tiruvakarai	Viḻupūram	Tiruvakarai Temple
Vaṇṇasarabam Daṇḍapāṇi Swāmy	Tiruvāmāthūr	Viḻupūram	Kumāra *Maḍam*, Tiruvāmāthūr. 6 Kms from Viḻupūram
Jñānāṉanda Giri Sāmy	Tirukōilūr	Viḻupūram	3 Kms Tirukōilūr-Tiruvaṇṇāmalai.
Śri Gñānāṉanda Sāmi	Tirukōilūr	Viḻupūram	45 Kms from Viḻupūram
Kumāra Dēvar	Āṇḍimaḍam	Viruthāchalam	between Viruthāchalam-Āṇḍimaḍam
Thatha Swāmy	Viruthāchalam	Viruthāchalam	at the banks of Maṇimutha River
Nirvāṇa Muthukumāra Sāmy; and Śiva Paḻaṉi Jñāni	Viruthāchalam	Viruthāchalam	Near to Thatha Swāmy *Samādhi*

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